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Canadian Historic Sites

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A Brief History of Lower Fort Garry,
by Dale Miquelon

The Big House, Lower Fort Garry,
by George C. Ingram

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Cover: The restored Big House in winter.

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In 1951, by an Order in Council, Lower Fort Garry near Selkirk, Manitoba, became a National Historic Park. A gift to the people of Canada from the Hudson's Bay Company, the Stone Fort had played a role in the development of the Dominion as a major supply post for the fur trade for half a century; a leader in the economic development of the Red River area, and a keeper of peace in times of political upheaval.

In 1965, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development undertook a program of restoration of Lower Fort Garry to the period which was the height of its development, the 1850s. An intensive cooperative effort by historians, archaeologists, architects, planners, museologists, engineers and skilled tradesmen was required to repair and furnish the Big House, renovate other buildings within the fort enclosure, and design museum exhibits and displays. Since an historic site cannot be properly restored if its history is not thoroughly understood by those responsible for its development for public use and enjoyment, one of the primary duties of the National Historic Sites Service was to provide the necessary background information for those who were to work on the reclamation. The papers in this issue, written originally as part of the development program, are a selection of the historical research carried out so far in support of the continuing Lower Fort Garry project. A subsequent issue will carry the report of the archaeological investigation of old building foundations and other features within and outside the walls of the lower fort, information which is also basic to the accurate restoration of this historic site.

The papers in this issue are offered, as are all papers in *Canadian Historic Sites,* in the belief that research should not be shelved when the project that originated it is finished, but should be made available to the public. While the program and its attendant research work will continue until the mid-1970s, it is felt that the reports already produced by the National Historic Sites Service are of sufficient scope and interest to justify publication now, particularly in view of the attention being given to the fur trade, and Manitoba in general, during 1970.

The National Historic Sites Service is deeply indebted to the Hudson's Bay Company, the Public Archives of Canada, of Manitoba, and other libraries, foundations and institutions in Canada for their willing cooperation in making primary source material relating to Lower Fort Garry available for study. Contemporary Company documents and records held in the Public Archives of Canada and those available only in the Hudson's Bay Company's London archives were examined by the authors, who were generously granted specific permission by the Company to consult original correspondence, accounts and journals.

The endnotes of the papers of this issue, citing primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliographies accompanying each paper, have been set down in standard bibliographic form, abbreviations being used only where particular sources have been referred to repeatedly or where the entry readily lent itself to such treatment. As the North American fur trade is a subject of interest outside the borders of Canada, only the London archives reference system has been used in citing Hudson's Bay Company source material, even though this material may have been examined on microfilm in the Public Archives of Canad.

For the critical student of history as well as the general reader, these papers on Lower Fort Garry will contain much of genuine interest. It is hoped they will also contribute to a more complete understanding of the real and potent influence of the old fort on the history of the development of the Canadian West.

A Brief History of Lower Fort Garry

by Dale Miquelon

Abstract

In 1831-32, construction began on Lower Fort Garry, the Hudson's Bay Company post near Selkirk, Manitoba. One of the Company's major posts in the provisioning of the fur trade, this fort was involved also in the economic development of the West. In 1965, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development undertook the restoration of the Stone Fort to the height of its existence, the 1850s. The author traces the history of Lower Fort Garry from its beginnings to its establishment as a National Historic Site.

Introduction

For a hundred years the Hudson's Bay Company confined its trading for furs to the shores of Hudson Bay. In the later 18th century, it established its first inland posts, responding to Canadian competition. The success of the North West Company of Montreal, especially after it had absorbed the breakaway XY Company in 1804, made a more aggressive policy essential. The Hudson's Bay Company was faced with the necessity of building a network of trading forts in the interior and uniting them to the entrepôt of York Factory, Moose Factory and Albany House by boat brigades, just as the North West Company's forts were sustained by the canoe brigades from Fort William. Skilled men must be found to conduct trade and man the fur-trade brigades, and the brigades, like armies, must travel on their stomachs.

In 1811, the Company accepted the Earl of Selkirk's proposal to establish a colony in the prairie region near the forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers because it hoped thereby to establish a labour pool and source of provisions in Rupert's Land. This was bound to cause trouble with the North West Company which had built Fort Gibraltar at the forks, where it collected pemmican to provision its own canoe brigades. Some Métis and retired Canadian traders had also settled nearby along the river banks.

Pemmican, the dried, pulverized meat of the prairie bison mixed with its melted fat and packed in sacks made from its skin, was the first staple of the prairie economy. Violence erupted over the question of who should control the supply of pemmican and generalized into a conflict between the two companies. Financially, the North West Company could not withstand the strain of the private war the companies waged or the legal disputes that followed. In 1821, it amalgamated with and was submerged in a new Hudson's Bay Company. For the colony at Red River, this meant stability and a chance to grow.

The settlers of Assiniboia lived on narrow farms on the alluvial silt flats fronting the rivers. The Selkirk group settled the parish of Kildonan along the Red below the forks. In 1818, French Canadian settlers arrived to found St. Boniface across the Red from Fort Garry at the forks and to raise the first church in western Canada. Most of the Métis were then living to the south at Pembina, but in 1823, many moved north to the banks of the Assiniboine and eventually more settled south along the Red above the forks. Company "servants" from the Orkneys retired to St. Andrew's on the lower Red, Kildonan, and St. James on the lower Assiniboine.[1]

Imported grains were cultivated and imported animals raised. Although both were ill-suited to the harsh prairie climate, from 1827 to 1858, the settlers provided sufficient for their own needs and those of the fur trade. In addition to farming, the Métis continued to hunt buffalo, after 1820 in a highly organized fashion, providing pemmican and dried meat for the Company as well as for themselves.

There were two posts at Red River: the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Garry at the forks and the colony's administrative centre, Fort Douglas, downstream at the centre of the Selkirk settlement. It built yet another post in the colony and

the only one standing today, Lower Fort Garry, the history of which is here traced in relation to the fur trade and the settlement, from trading post to national historic site.[2]

In the fall of 1830, men were cutting cellars out of the virgin prairie some 23 miles down-river from Fort Garry. This was the beginning of the construction of the Hudson's Bay Company's first stone fort in Rupert's Land since the building of the ill-fated Fort Prince of Wales, begun in 1732. This new fort was to replace Fort Garry which stood further south at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, and would bear the same name. The need for a new fort was imperative, for old Fort Garry had been severely damaged by the great flood of 1826 which had also carried off Fort Douglas.

Why the new fort was being built so far from the traditional site at the forks is not immediately clear. George Simpson, Governor since 1826 of the southern as well as the northern departments in Rupert's Land, and the man responsible for the decision, explained it in his 1841 journal in terms of the growth of population in the lower Red River valley:

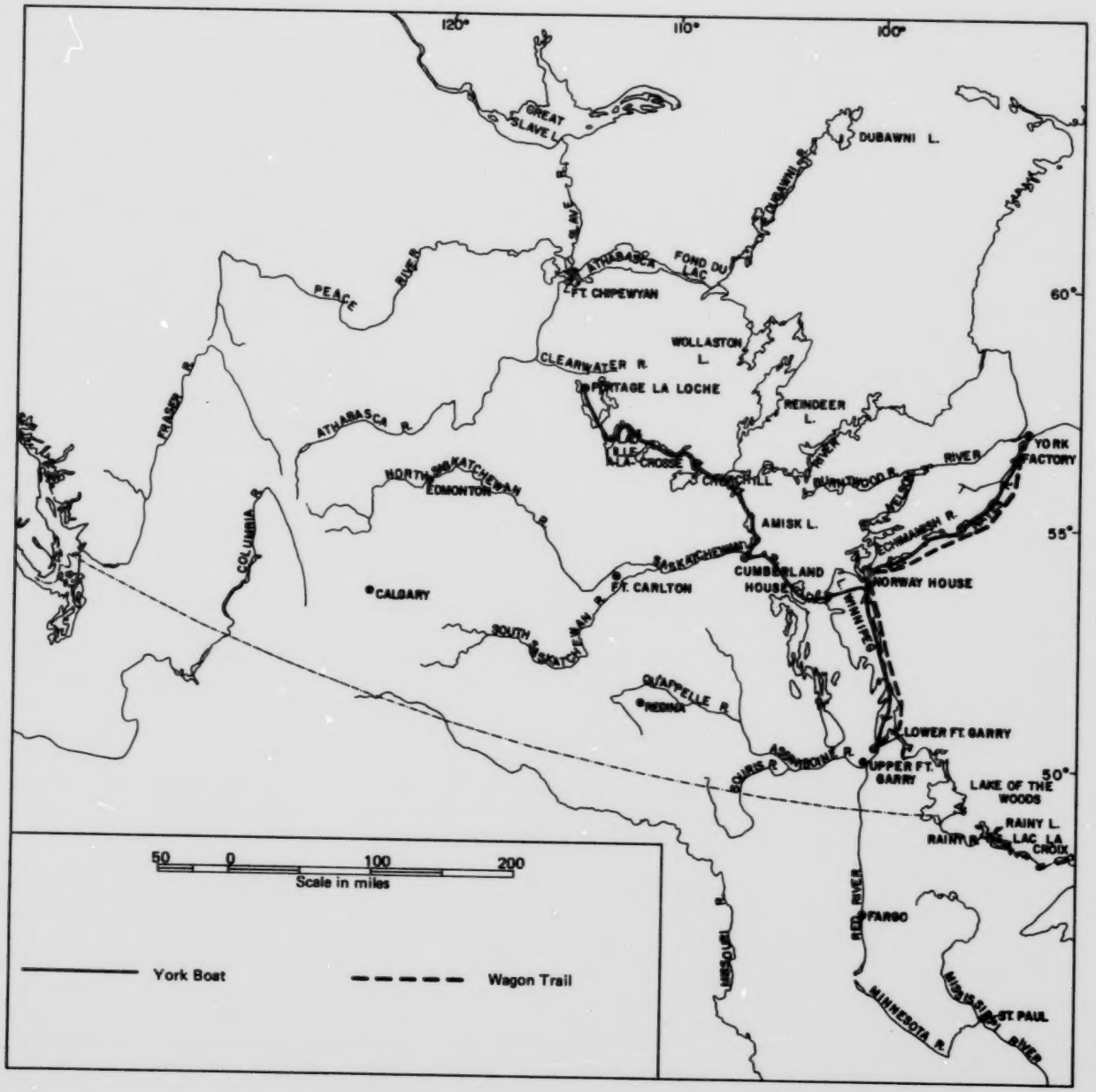
Some few years ago I had noticed the gradual extension of the colony down the River, which induced me to think that a Fort in that direction might be of service to the Company, and one day whilst riding through the settlement I came upon a fine level spot, where the banks of the river were high, with abundance of limestone and wood on the opposite shore, this I at once fixed upon as the scite of the new Fort.[1]

It is out of character for the economy-minded Simpson to have built a stone fort where a wooden sales shop would have sufficed. The above explanation was written at a time when Lower Fort Garry appeared to be a half-abandoned and expensive failure, when certain of its intended purposes were only bitter memories and others not yet realized. Writing to the Company's London Committee ten years earlier, Simpson had given more concrete reasons and emphasized the foresight of his decision:

The Establishment of Fort Garry is in a very dilapidated state, as much so as to be scarcely habitable, and lies so low that we are every successive spring apprehensive that it will be carried away by high water at the breaking up of the ice. It is moreover very disadvantageously situated, being about 45 miles from the Lake and 18 miles above the rapids. I therefore determined last fall [1830] on abandoning the Establishment altogether, and, instead of wasting time, labour, and money in temporary repairs of tottering wooden buildings to set about erecting a good solid comfortable Establishment at once of stone and lime, in such a situation as to be entirely out of the reach of high water and would facilitate any extensive operations connected with craft and transport which may hereafter be entered into.[2]

While the difficulties associated with the problems of transportation and safety from flood damage might provide an adequate explanation of the move from the forks, Simpson had a more personal reason for wanting a "solid comfortable Establishment" to be built; this was his intention to live at Red River. Schemes to raise cattle for tallow, to cultivate hemp and flax, and to raise sheep on a large scale, all intended to stabilize the colony's economy and reduce the danger of disaffection by the colonists, were projects requiring his presence in the

1 Transportation routes of the fur trade, 1830-60, showing only the York Factory-Red River trunk line and the Portage la Loche York boat brigade route.



settlement.[3] It is also possible that he felt his residency would be good politics and that a gubernatorial establishment would heighten the prestige of the Hudson's Bay Company in the settlement.

There is yet one more explanation for the building of Lower Fort Garry. Simpson did not intend to live alone at Red River, but with his eighteen-year-old cousin and bride, Frances. This could explain the building of the gracious Big House of the fort, more like a country manor than a trading post, and its secluded setting. Compare this retreat to the primitive mixed-blood society of the forks which a young Englishwoman might well have considered barbaric and where Simpson's own illegitimate offspring made their homes. As Frances wrote, she was "terrified to look about her in case of seeing something disagreeable."[4] What weight Simpson may have given to each of these various reasons when making his decision to build the Stone Fort is something we cannot know and of which he may have been himself unaware.

About mid-summer, 1830, Pierre Leblanc arrived in Red River charged with the task of renovating a house for the Simpsons. Here was the man who was to be the builder of Lower Fort Garry. He seems to have been the one man in the Company's employ capable of such work and had been similarly employed before. In 1832, Simpson wrote of him that he "Has filled the situation of Carpenter, Painter, Storeman, Builder, Indian Trader, Conductor of Works at the Depots of York and Fort William and is now employed in superintending the building of the new establishment of Fort Garry. A very useful man. . .in any capacity."[5] Leblanc directed the works at Lower Fort Garry and later those at the new Upper Fort Garry as well. It is entirely possible that he never wielded the mason's hammer in Red River, his position being rather that of administrator and foreman — "Conductor of Works" as Simpson called him. In July, 1838, Leblanc went west to Fort Vancouver "for the purpose of conducting some building operations there." On 22 October, he and his three children drowned when their canoe overturned in the Columbia.[6]

Supernumeraries, always a great problem for the Hudson's Bay Company, provided the labour force which built the fort. Those employed in the earliest period were "of the McKenzie River Frêt Establishment, some of my [Simpson's] own crew, and a few of the young hands who came out by the ship. . .none of whom could have been so advantageously employed anywhere else."[7] Tradesmen were hired, as stipulated in the original Northern Council Minute governing the work. Of the many masons who may have been employed, we know the name of only one, André Gaudrie, who was hired by Leblanc and began work in May, 1831.[8] He probably remained with the Company until the end of 1834.

The first building erected was the Big House or officers' quarters which stands today in the middle of the fort. The gallery surrounding the house was not then covered and four dormers similar to those on the stores decorated the roof. Next the fur loft-retail store was built, it and the Big House being completed by the end of 1832. In March, 1834, Thomas Simpson wrote, "We are making preparations to build a large granery and provision store this summer, unless the work be stopped."[9] Apparently the work was stopped, for in 1838, George Simpson ordered that new buildings erected at Lower Fort Garry should "form one side of the quadrangle or square of which the main House and stores already form two sides, and the River the third."[10] Thus the site of the second storehouse was then empty, and the present structure was erected sometime after 1838. That Simpson may have regarded his new fort as something less than practical is suggested by the fact that he did not inform the London Committee until the project was well under way. "The Big Wigs at home are rather cool on the subject," remarked George's cousin, Thomas Simpson, "and I do not wonder at it."[11]

At the same time the attempt to remove business to the lower fort was a failure. The Company's business in Red River was too dependent on the retail trade which, of necessity, must be carried on in the area of greatest population density. The invaluable pemmican trade, too, had to be conducted at a more southerly point since hunters would not be inclined to carry their burdens an extra 20 miles past the traditional bartering place. Finally, it was difficult for the Red River servants of the Company to exile themselves to the country in a period when transportation was laborious. Nor was it well suited as a depot for those areas reached via the Assiniboine and Dauphin rivers. Although Simpson's new location was in some points a logical one, the pattern of settlement was by this time too well established to be ruptured by his mere wish. In 1834, he agreed that

a fort was needed at the forks. John Charles mentions this in a letter to James Hargrave:

I believe our Premier is now fully Convinced that a Respectable Establishment is Necessary, & I understand from the Governor, Stones will be hauled during the Winter from all quarters but chiefly from the Hill behind Mr. Birds House where the Governor went and examined the Spot himself accompanied by your Humble Servant.[12]

The building of the upper fort was given top priority. In 1837 it was completely finished and Governor Christie moved there from the lower fort to live on a year-round basis. This fur trade double shuffle appeared a bit mad to Thomas Simpson. "Business here is tagged together in the most strange and unsatisfactory manner," he observed. "For instance, the new fort recently erected is already nearly abandoned and another fort (certainly much needed) is to be built at the Forks which, is now the headquarters."[13]

As the new fort failed to satisfy the exigencies of the fur trade, so did it fail to satisfy Frances Simpson. While still living in the upper settlement, she had given birth to her first child, only to lose it some months later. The rigours of the climate and the rude frontier society were unbearable to the young woman. In 1833, the Simpsons left Lower Fort Garry for London where they made their home for the next 12 years, although Simpson, of course, spent a fair amount of time travelling in the Company territories. The experiment of residency in Red River had failed.[14]

When the Simpsons moved to the Stone Fort, they were accompanied by George's cousin, Thomas, who acted as bookkeeper. He held the position during the 1833-34 season. His residency would be of little interest were it not that he shortly became a celebrated Arctic explorer. It is asserted by some that he remained at the lower fort during the fall and winter of 1836, and that he there studied astronomy and related subjects preparatory to his voyage of discovery with Peter Warren Dease. Simpson himself connected the work of Sir John Franklin and Lieutenant Back by tracing the Arctic coast from the mouth of the Mackenzie to Point Barrow. Never one for modesty, Thomas wrote his brother, "I and I *alone* have the well-earned honour of uniting the Arctic to the great Western Ocean, and of unfurling the British flag on Point Barrow." He was awarded the Queen's Arctic Medal and a life pension of £100 per annum. He did not live to receive these honours, dying of a gun shot wound under mysterious circumstances on the St. Paul trail in 1840.[1]

A decade of obscurity descended upon the fort. The sales shop remained open for the benefit of the lower settlement, but most business and all administration was carried on at the upper fort. The seed of discord was planted in this quiet soil in 1839 when Adam Thom clambered out of a York boat and established himself in the Big House of Lower Fort Garry as the first recorder of Rupert's Land. As recorder, he was the colony's judge and the Company's legal adviser. Thom had been a journalist while attending law school in Montreal, and his "Anti-Gallic Letters," published in the pro-English Montreal *Herald* had helped foment the rebellion of 1837. Lord Durham had taken him to England in 1839 to help in the preparation of his famous report. In London he met Simpson who hired him as recorder. His appearance at Lower Fort Garry was an altogether unfortunate one for Red River.[2]

In spite of his Gallophobia, Thom did not cause any great dissension until 1844. From that year his legal advice, which helped to bolster the Company in its suppression of free trade, aroused a storm of resentment. Bryce compared him to Charles I's Wentworth, a good man with a bad cause, being pitted against the "Village Hampton," free trader James Sinclair.[3] The disaffection in the colony aroused by the free-trade controversy moved Simpson to begin negotiations with the British government for the establishment of troops in Red River. Their arrival in 1846 would again bring animation to the Stone Fort.

As the free-trade movement gained strength, Company authority began to crumble, but the increasing tension between Great Britain and the United States afforded Simpson the opportunity to re-enforce the trade monopoly largely at the expense of the British taxpayer. From 1844, he had directed memorials to Whitehall through the London Committee or Governor-General Metcalfe in Canada, describing the danger of American invasion and the necessity for the establishment of regular troops in Red River as a deterrent. The election of President Polk in the United States and the Oregon boundary dispute combined to lend credence to his arguments. The free-trade movement was, in fact, so closely linked with American traders in Minnesota that Simpson could raise the cry of loyalty and monopoly in one breath without raising a questioning eyebrow in London. The state of the colony by 1846 is best read at first hand from the discerning pen of the governor himself.

This settlement was the scene of much excitement during the past winter, ensuing from a mischevious system of agitation which has been kept up by McDermott, Sinclair, Kittson [an American trader] and other designing persons who expect their ingenuity to mislead the ignorant and half savage population by whom we are here surrounded, with a view to promoting their own private interests. These disaffected people have been very successful in inducing a belief in the public mind, especially of the half-caste races, that the charter affords no exclusive right of trade to the Company as against themselves, the natives of the soil, and they now claim as a birthright, the liberty to hunt and trade throughout the Company's Territories, and either to convey their furs out of the country or to dispose of them to whom they please. . . . Kittson, gaining confidence by the protection afforded him by the half-breeds, will, it is expected, move from Pembina next winter and seat himself down as a trader within the settlement, amongst the numerous French half-breed population situated above the Forks. Could we with safety attempt to arrest this man and remove him from the country we should have no hesitation in doing so, but it would be madness to attempt it in the present state of public feeling: in that event therefore, of his coming, we can only protest against any improper interference with the trade and patiently wait till the means may be afforded of enforcing the laws, which at present, are little more than a dead letter. . . .

If the Military force proposed to be sent out by Government come to York this year, we shall be prepared to convey them to Red River.[1]

The government finally agreed to send the requested military force. That they were entirely ignorant of the intended use of these forces seems unlikely, for the regiment selected was the Sixth Regiment of Foot, a small body altogether incapable of the type of duty necessitated by border defence.[2] However, they were admirably suited for Simpson's purpose, to quash disaffection in the settlement.

The Hudson's Bay Company was very much alive to the importance of the venture and went to considerable inconvenience to accommodate the troops. At Lower Fort Garry the Company removed its operations to a distillery and malting house recently built near the fort. Adam Thom vacated the Big House. Work was pushed ahead on the walls and bastions of the fort, notwithstanding the fact that the labour shortage was aggravated by an epidemic.[3] Assured that troops were forthcoming, Simpson left for England to consider the important business of devising a new government for the fur trade colony; one that would appease the colonists and yet not be inimical to the Company's interests.

On 25 June 1846, the Sixth, or Royal Warwickshire Regiment of Foot, embarked at Cork in the *Blenheim* and *Crocodile* which arrived at York Factory on 8 and 13 August. The commander of the expedition, Major (later Colonel) John Ffolliott Crofton, arrived at the lower fort on 10 September. His first comment on the settlers was, "The tone of the inhabitants is disaffected and I fancy they prefer American to British rule."[4] Thereafter his opinion of them deteriorated rapidly. Crofton himself took half of the men to the upper fort where he established his headquarters. The lower fort garrison commanded by Captain Sullivan comprised some 150 members of the Sixth together with the Sappers.

Army routine was established at the two forts. At ten in the morning the troops paraded, the guard mounted and officers inspected the barracks. At four o'clock there was roll call. An event of some importance occurred on 4 June 1847, when Crofton met the Indian chief Peguis at the lower fort. This was the first meeting of an Indian chief with an officer

of the Crown in the western Canadian interior. "I had a grand dress on, tell your father, and had great state," wrote Crofton to his wife. He gave the chief a present selected by Hudson's Bay clerk John Black valued at £7.10s. 0d.

Crofton was not happy at Red River and pressed for relief. When this arrived, he departed for England, leaving the Stone Fort on Wednesday, 30 June 1847. By September it was known that the regiment would leave the following summer. They had pacified the colony as much with their purchasing power as with law enforcement. "What will be thought in the settlement when it is announced that the troops are to be withdrawn?" wrote John Black from Lower Fort Garry. "The settlers have prospered exceedingly in trade with the soldiers. Their golden dreams of universal prosperity are to be nipped in the bud."[5]

The projected withdrawal of the Sixth from Red River threw the management of the Company into a panic and the Committee convinced the British government of the necessity for replacement. Archibald Barclay, Secretary to the Governor and Committee in London, reported that "The case was put as strongly as it could well be without disclosing the fact that the protection required was not so much against the Americans as against the settlers themselves."[6]

In August and September, 1848, all the troops were embarked at York Factory. At the same time a body of 56 Chelsea Pensioners, the first of a larger force, was coming down the Hayes with their commander, Major Caldwell. The new garrison was quartered briefly in Upper Fort Garry and then settled along the Assiniboine.[7] Meanwhile, the Company men began to shift their stores back to the Stone Fort.

Simpson had meanwhile procured a new constitution for Red River. Major Caldwell, Commander of the Chelsea Pensioners, was made Governor of Assiniboia and the civil government of the colony was separated from the management of the Company. Intended to mollify the settlers, the new measure merely served to weaken Company authority. Chief Factor Christie could no longer exercise the direct legal pressures against free traders that he had as governor, and he determined to attack the growing menace through a new medium, the courts. On Ascension Day, 17 May 1849, Guillaume Sayer came to trial for trading in furs. His was a test case. A fair conclusion was reached when the jury found Sayer guilty but recommended mercy. The armed gathering that awaited the verdict outside accepted this decision as the *de facto* liberation of the trade. The cry of *"Le commerce est libre!"* passing from mouth to mouth ended forever the old fur-trade monopoly.

Denied means of coercion and no longer in control of the government of Assiniboia, the Hudson's Bay Company sought to restore its crumbling authority in Red River by means of influence and diplomacy. It was decided that a governor of Rupert's Land should reside in the colony. Eden Colvile, son of a deputy governor of the Company and a Lower Canadian businessman himself, was named associate governor on 3 January 1849.[1] He would live in the colony while Simpson remained at Lachine. His task had been made doubly difficult by the bumbling Governor Caldwell, who had managed to divide the colony over, of all things, his handling in the courts of an illicit love affair.[2]

Governor and Mrs. Colvile landed at Lower Fort Garry, their new home, on 11 August 1850,[3] just in time to save the colony from open violence. They carried out their mission with great tact, and the colony seems to have been delighted with them.

For a time Colvile presided over both the Court and Council of Assiniboia, but was ordered by the Company to drop these positions to maintain the separation of political and company affairs. At the same time, the London Council reduced Adam Thom to the position of clerk of the court. Later improvements in government included Thom's complete removal from office and the admission of a Métis to the Council in 1853, and the appointment of a bilingual recorder, F.G. Johnson in 1855. From then until 1869, the government of the colony remained relatively stable.[4]

While living at the fort, the Colviles were visited by John Rae, the Arctic explorer who was returning from his third expedition, his second Franklin Relief Expedition. He remained in Red River for 18 days, and worked on the journal of his celebrated voyage.[5]

The Colviles left Lower Fort Garry in the fall of 1853. During their occupation, the Stone Fort once again had assumed the role of a gracious residence for which in part it was originally intended. Many improvements were made. During the great flood of 1852, when the fort was a refuge to many distinguished colonists, Bishop Anderson visited the place and was pleased with what he found. "The Fort has been improved with much taste by Governor and Mrs. Colvile, and it began to wear much more of an English aspect: the annuals were above ground, and the lawn smooth and green."[6]

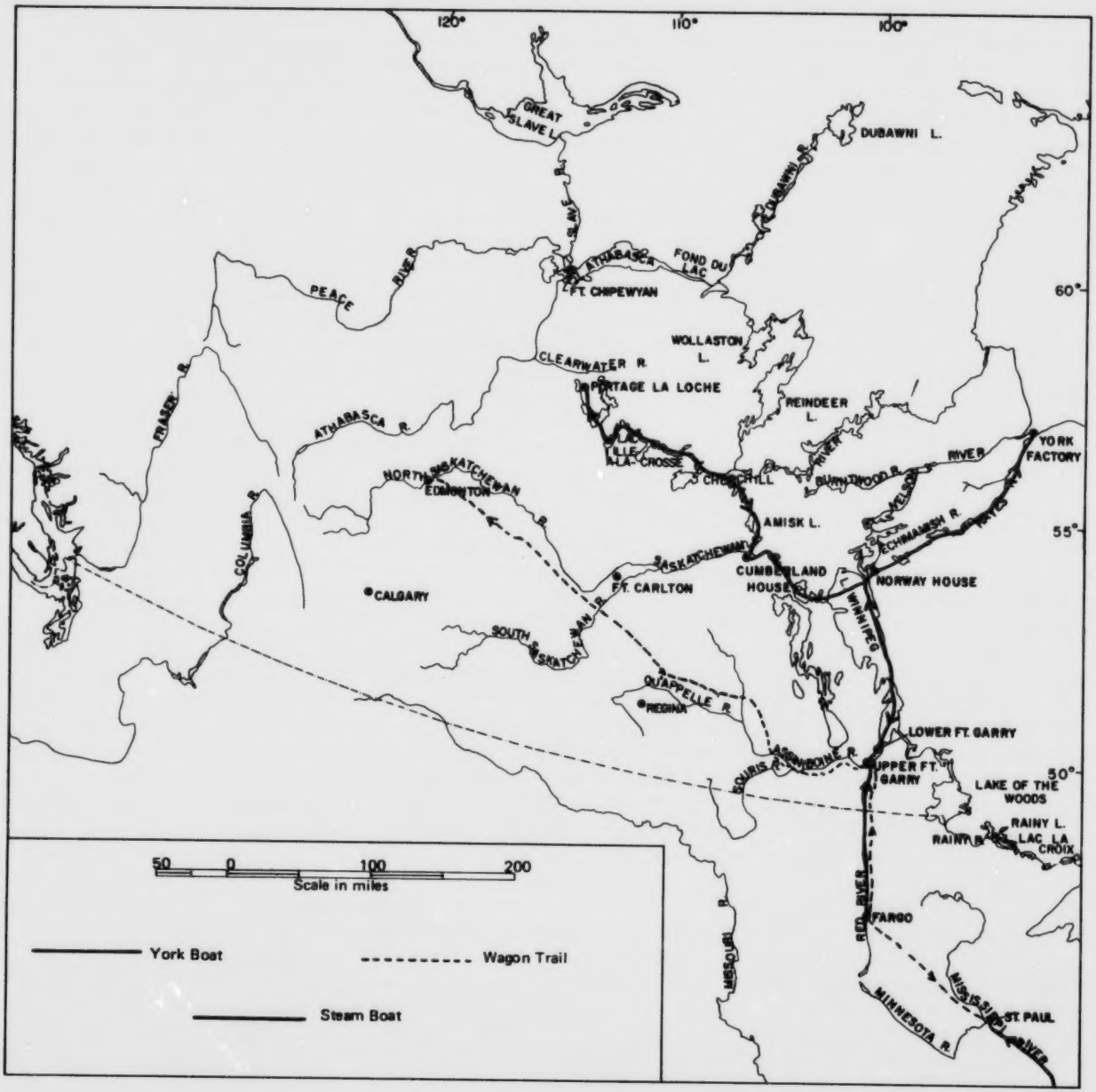
That the Red River Settlement was for nearly five decades the Hudson's Bay Company's major supply centre for men and provisions made it central to the transportation system of the fur trade.

Why Red River and Fort Garry should have been the centre of the trade is not evident at first sight. York and Norway House were the seats of the Council of Rupert's Land and the distributing centres for trade goods. But the pemmican of the plains, the trip men, and the flour from the river lots made Red River the force which sent the great transport shuttles weaving in the spring. When the York boats filed down the Red in June, following the ice in its northward retreat, like the wild geese flying on their way to the Arctic, they began the northern summer, the season of furious activity in the fur trade.[1]

In addition, the fur trade experienced a transportation revolution that replaced Norway House with Red River. This revolution entailed a change in both the mode and the routes of transportation. From the 1820s to the 1860s, furs and supplies were moved by a system of York boat brigades, the canoe having been discarded in favour of the boat after the union with the North West Company in 1821. At specified points inland, returns of furs were exchanged for outfits of trade goods, the two brigades returning to their respective starting points before the rivers froze over. Only in this way could the vast distance of the fur trade empire be spanned in the short navigation season.

Several systems were tried and changes were made in the interest of greater economy and speed. By 1830, the pattern of boat communication had been more or less stabilized. All trade goods were transported down the Hayes River trunk line from York Factory to Norway House, the inland depot. At the end of May, the LaLoche or Methey Portage brigade left Lower Fort Garry for Norway House where it received the outfit for the Mackenzie district. It then went to Methey Portage where in July it exchanged the outfits for the returns. Retracing its route, the brigade returned to Norway House and thence to York Factory where the Mackenzie furs were exchanged for a portion of the Red River outfit. By early September, the brigade was back in Red River where the trip men made their homes.[2] In the early spring there was also a direct shipment of goods to Red River from York Factory.[3] The Athabaska depot of Fort Chipewyan being twice as close to Norway House as the Mackenzie depot of Fort Simpson, its brigade went directly to Norway House and back in the navigation season.[4] The Saskatchewan brigade from Fort Edmonton, "the wildest men in the service," travelled a much more southerly route with a longer navigation season, and consequently was required to carry its furs directly to York Factory.[5] The English River district east of Lake Winnipeg, with its depot at Fort Alexander on the Winnipeg River, carried its furs to either York Factory or Norway House, and on returning, stopped at Lower Fort Garry for its provisions.[6] The fort also shipped goods west to Lake Manitoba via the "Little Saskatchewan."[7] Traffic between Norway House and Lower Fort Garry was heavy, and from 1831-32, two small sloops were used on Lake Winnipeg to carry provisions north and bring back part of the Red River outfit.[8] These made it practical to supply forts Pelly and Ellice and the southern

2 Transportation routes of the fur trade, 1860-80, by York boat, Red River cart and steamboat.



valleys of the Qu'appelle, Assiniboine, and Souris rivers from Upper Fort Garry.[9]

The commercial use of the Red River cart on the trail from St. Paul, Minnesota, to Red River was the first step in a significant transportation revolution which rendered obsolete the river route from York Factory, leaving the upper and lower forts even more central to the Hudson's Bay Company's trading system. The pioneers of the new route were free traders, and their trade grew alarmingly after the Sayer trial in 1849 showed the Company's inability to enforce its monopoly. By 1854, these interlopers were even trading on English River, deep in Hudson's Bay Company territory. In 1852, the first American railway reached the Mississippi, thus increasing the speed and economy of the southern route and its inevitable triumph over the northern route.[10] Goods could then be shipped by rail from New York to the Mississippi, by steamboat to St. Paul, and thence to Red River by cart train. The increasing volume of trade and the new necessity of competition accentuated the faults of high cost and low capacity on the York route.

While free traders like Norman W. Kittson, who had established himself at Pembina in 1843, could order goods during the winter and expect delivery in the summer, the Hudson's Bay Company was bedeviled by a system at once "slow, laborious, and uncertain. . . .The Company's outfits were ordered two or three years in advance of delivery; and to guard against the system's occasional breakdowns, reserves had always to be kept on hand."[11] As opportunities for employment increased (for example, carting from St. Paul), the Hudson's Bay Company found it more and more difficult to obtain satisfactory trip men for the tortuous York route and the inland brigades. This was discernible as early as 1836, after which date most of the freighting on the trunk line was done by contractors.[12]

In 1849, 1858, and 1859, ships carrying goods from England to Hudson Bay were lost because of overloading.[13] In 1857, the trunk line between York Factory and Norway House broke down completely when it was found incapable of carrying both a detachment of the Royal Canadian Rifles and the year's outfit.[14] It was this low capacity which had prompted Simpson to attempt to build a winter road along the route in 1825.[15] The Company yielded, and in 1858 imported a portion of the Red River outfit via St. Paul. The experiment was a success; however, the process of completely displacing the York route took 17 years, not being completed until 1875.[16]

The Earl of Southesk wrote in his journal for 1859:

Thursday, the 10th of June was a notable day at Fort Garry. The first steamer that had yet navigated the Red River made her appearance that morning, bringing two or three passengers from Minnesota. "Ans Northup" was the name of this small, shabby, stern-wheel boat, mean and insignificant in itself, but important as the harbinger of new developments of what Americans are pleased to call civilization.[17]

According to A.C. Gluek, the establishment of steamboat traffic on the Red was to lag this pioneer venture by a decade, mainly because the water level fell below navigable depth between 1863 and 1869.[18] The cart trains were active, however, and as early as 1861, a significant proportion of the Red, Swan, and Saskatchewan river districts' outfits was being imported by the southern route.[19] But the 1860s were as difficult a decade for carters as for boatmen. The Sioux War (1862), the American Civil War (1861-65) and the inefficiency, if not corruption, of St. Paul agents combined to render the southern route less than successful. But conditions were even worse on the York route where the brigade system in which "none but the scum of the population worked" broke down. From 1867, the Athabaska outfit was shipped from St. Paul, and from 1868, furs from the Mackenzie and Athabaska districts were shipped out via the southern route.[20]

Steamboat traffic eventually displaced the cart trains. The carters moved northward and in the 1870s worked overland between Edmonton and Upper Fort Garry. The steamboats themselves were overtaken by the railroad in 1878 when the south branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed.

Goods imported by the southern route were made up into inland packages not at Norway House, but in Red River. Lower Fort Garry became the transshipment point for northern destinations. This was not because the St. Andrew's rapids between the two forts prevented transshipment for northern destinations at the upper fort. The Lower Fort Garry journal beginning in 1868 contains several references to York boats and river steamers travelling between the two forts.[21] If the river's water level was low, cart trains were used.[22] The significant factor seems to have been that different kinds of craft were used on the river and the lake.

According to the journal, steamers from the lake or upper settlement never passed beyond Lower Fort Garry. It is probable that inland packages sent out from the lower fort were made up there from baled goods, since to have prepared them at the upper fort would have involved another costly and time-consuming step in the business of transshipment.

The Company's small sloops on Lake Winnipeg were dwarfed by the schooner which was added to the fleet in the 1860s. Large vessels from the lower fort began to meet the Saskatchewan brigade at Grand Rapids and deliver goods and provisions at that point. The *Chief Commissioner*, first steamer on the lake, was launched in 1872. In 1874, the *Northcote* began operation on the Saskatchewan and in 1877, a tramway was constructed over the Grand Rapids portage.

The dismantling of York Factory began in 1872 when the task of making up the accounts for the Northern Department was transferred to Upper Fort Garry. Only the difficulty in perfecting steamboat navigation prevented immediate abandonment of the York route. Finally in the summer of 1874, Chief Factor Fortesque sent his overstock of trade goods to Red River and settled down to a quiet local trade on the coastal plain of the historic bay;[23] and so York Factory continued until the ancient depot, built before 1853, was abandoned in 1957. Thus all goods were now passing through Red River; and except for those destined for the southwest, east of the South Saskatchewan, all goods were funneled through Lower Fort Garry. This activity is reflected in Robinson's description of Lower Fort Garry in the 1870s:

Leaving the trading-store, a succession of warehouses containing stores and supplies, is next encountered. The last and most massive building, near the gateway, is the warehouse of packages destined for posts inland. These are goods imported from England and other countries, and to be used in the fur-trade exclusively. In this vast bulk of merchandise there is not a single package of over one hundred pounds weight. The greater portion weigh but eighty or ninety pounds, strongly packed, the cases lined with zinc and bound with iron. . . . Twice annually this warehouse is emptied by the departure of the boat-brigades for the interior, and as often replenished by shipment from England. Summer is the busy season, as then all freighting is carried on, and the accounts for the year closed.[24]

The boat brigades mentioned by Robinson seem to have been a thing of the past at the lower fort when Gunn wrote the following description about 1880:

This station, though the walls and towers have been left in an unfinished condition and giving tokens of decay, is notwithstanding the most important post the Hon. Company has in the country on account of its being the terminus of lake navigation for steamers. Here they receive their cargoes of trading goods, which they take to the Big Fall at the mouth of the Sascatchewan, whence these goods are forwarded to the west and to the districts lying to the north of that river. The steamers on their return trips bring the furs collected on the Sascatchewan and in the districts to the north during the winter, and are thence forwarded through the United States to England.[25]

Thus the southern route gradually replaced that from York Factory, and the two forts Garry divided between them the functions of Norway House as inland depot. Sloop, schooner and lake steamer in turn had enhanced the position of the lower fort as distributing centre for the vast regions that drain into Lake Winnipeg and thence to the Bay.

Retail trading was the earliest economic function of Lower Fort Garry. It probably began with the completion of the fur loft and retail store building in 1832 and increased with the growth of the settlement. Here business is described as it was conducted shortly before the opening of the new wooden sales shop in 1874.

Immediately at the left of the gateway is the trading-store, devoted solely to the sale of goods. A large stone structure of three stories, it has within its walls nearly every article used in that climate. The sales-room is a square apartment, with no attempt at ornament, no plaster, the ceiling merely the joists and flooring of the second flat, thickly studded with nails and hooks, from which are suspended various articles of trade. Along the side walls are box shelves, nearly two feet deep. On the floor within the counter are piled bales of goods, bundles of prints, hardware, etc.; and this space within the counter comprises almost the entire room. A small area is railed off near the door, sufficiently large to hold twenty standing customers. When this is filled, the remaining patrons must await their turn in the courtyard; and it is not at all an unusual sight to see from fifty to one hundred people standing quietly about outside until their time comes to be served. The best goods of all manufactures alone are sold here. No shoddy or inferior goods are ever imported or sold by the company. . . . The principal articles of trade are tea, sugar, calico, blankets, ammunition, fishing gear, and a kind of cloth, very thick and resembling blanketing called duffle.

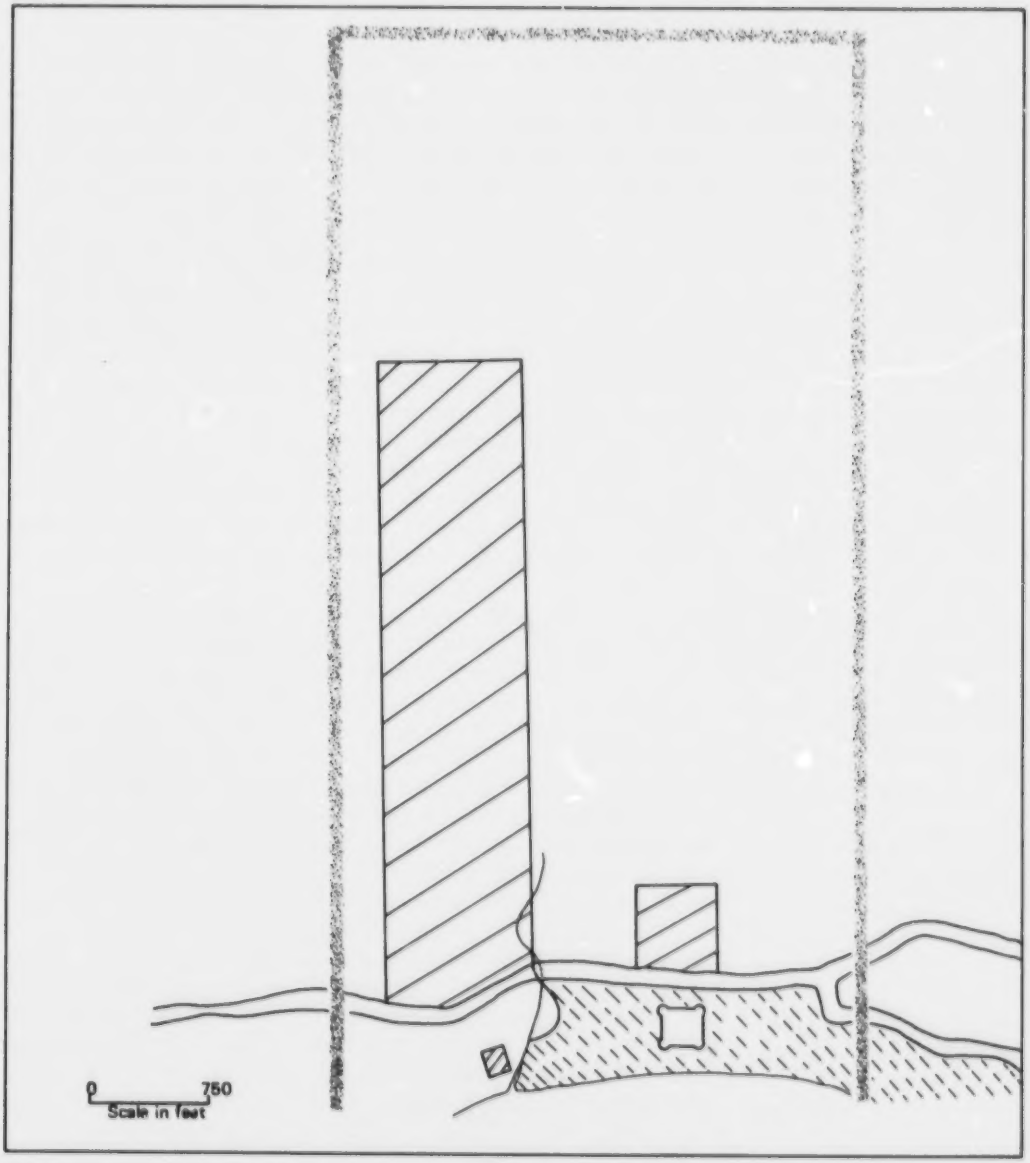
In the store there is no such thing known as exhibiting goods with a view of increasing the purchases of a probable customer. Whatever is asked for is produced, and, being paid for, the customer is ignored at once.[1]

Red River provided the fur trade with both trip men and cargo (agricultural products before the transportation revolution and thereafter trade goods in addition), and was thus the starting point of boat brigades. Had it been well wooded, it would also have been the natural place to build the means of transport. Boats for the Company's service seem to have been built originally at Norway House; nevertheless an important shipyard developed at Lower Fort Garry. Since a ready source of building materials could not have attracted the industry, by implication these must have been transported to a source of skilled labour. If the Company's shipwrights were independent farmer-craftsmen from the lower settlement (such as Samuel Taylor, the first one known to us),[2] boat building could have begun as early as the 1830s. But in the present state of our knowledge, any date given for the beginning of the industry would be conjecture.

York boats, decked sloops and schooners were all built at Lower Fort Garry in the industrial area between the fort and the nearby creek, but we have detailed information only from the year 1865 when Samuel Taylor recorded in his journal that he had begun working on the schooner *Polly* under the direction of a Mr. John M. Brown. In September, Brown and a crew went out on an expedition in search of wooden crooks for the bows and sterns of boats, and the actual building began in the winter. On 22 November, Taylor "began to build a kettle inn for to steam boards for the boats."[3] He records the building of a new sawmill in May, 1866, which suggests that there had been one for some time past. References to boat building continue in the extant Lower Fort Garry journals (1868-74).[4] On Tuesday, 7 April 1872, a new steamboat, the *Chief Commissioner,* was launched from the shipyard, the first steamer built in the western Canadian interior, if not in all western Canada. In the following May, workmen began sawing lumber for the Saskatchewan river steamer, *Northcote,* which was assembled above Grand Rapids in 1874 and became the first steamer on the muddy river of the north. The steamboats displaced the smaller craft on the Red and Saskatchewan rivers and on Lake Winnipeg and in their turn, for a time, remained supreme.

The occupation which was perhaps the most characteristic of Lower Fort Garry was farming. As early as 1838, George Simpson envisaged the fort as an ideal site for the Company's principal farming establishment.[5] The plan did not immediately come to fruition, perhaps because of the dismal failure of the Company's second experimental farm which George Cary was at that time establishing on the Assiniboine. The lower fort must wait some 20 years. In 1857, Simpson's attention was drawn to a young clerk who was known to have had considerable farming experience in Fifeshire, his Scottish homeland. Simpson placed the young man, Alexander R. Lillie, in charge of the lower fort with

3 A plan adapted from A.H. Vaughan's survey of 1874 shows the Hudson's Bay Company reserve in heavy outline. Areas marked by diagonal lines represent cultivated lands; the dotted area around the Stone Fort is meadowland, and unmarked areas are woodland or waste areas.



instructions to make a farm of it. Thus was begun the Company's third farm and its first successful one.[6] Roderick Campbell describes it as it was two years after its foundation:

A very large farm had been brought under cultivation in the immediate vicinity. . . .The experiment in agriculture proved most encouraging, and the harvest was everything that could be desired. . . . The fort stood in the middle of a two-mile reservation on the river bank. Outside of this limit many of the Company's retired servants had settled.[7]

In 1875, the date of our earliest map, the farm consisted of about 100 acres,[8] and may well have been that large at a much earlier date. About 80 acres of this farm were contained in a long tract of land northwest of the fort across the road. There was a smaller plot directly north of the fort, also across the road, and another small area southwest of the fort across the creek. In later years a garden existed immediately northeast of the fort, but this is probably a late development since that was the area earlier set aside for stables and barns.[9]

Barley and wheat were grown, and the latter was exported to Norway House and points northwest as flour or barrelled biscuit.[10] Pickled meat, too, was barrelled and shipped out for the sustenance of the fur traders.[11] Large quantities of turnips, potatoes, and other vegetables were also raised, probably for the use of the fort's own staff.[12]

The farming and ship-building operations necessitated the founding of several secondary industries. At first, wheat from the farm was sent to the upper settlement to be milled; then possibly to a steam mill built at the St. Andrew's rapids in 1863.[13] On 1 November 1865, a steam mill for the grinding of wheat began operation at the lower fort.[14] It will be recalled that a distillery and malting house were erected at the fort in 1845, and that there is reason to believe the Company used these buildings for business purposes during the military occupation of 1846-48.[15] Failing to receive the authorization of the Council, the distillery was never used for its intended purpose. The buildings evidently remained neglected storage sheds at best until 1870, for which year there is an entry in the post journal stating, "Got men to commence repairing the distillery and another party to repair the side of the Engine Room that was pretty nearly falling."[16] In 1871, a new brewery began operation, and on 18 April, the first lot of beer was put away in locally made casks in the cellars under the sales shop.[17] Robinson sums up the essence of the entire fort complex as it was in the 1870s, perhaps its period of greatest activity:

Outside the walls of the fort, but belonging to it, is situated a miniature village of many and varied industries. In neat dwellings reside the heads of the different departments of what may be termed the outdoor business of the company. Here dwells the chief engineer of all the steam power in use upon its ships, boats, mills, etc. Here also lives the farmer who directs the cultivation of the immense agricultural farm connected with the fort; the herdsman, who superintends the rearing and care of the droves of cattle, horses and other stock of the corporation; the miller in charge of the milling interests; the shipwright, who directs the building, launching and refitting of the company's fleet. In the rear of these dwellings are mess-rooms for the accommodation of the workmen and the residences of the different overseers. Separate a little stand the flouring-mills, brewery, ship-yards, machine shops, etc., all supplied with the latest labor-saving machinery. Scattered along the bank of the river lie moored or drawn up on the beach the miniature navy of the company; here a lake steamer, there river steamboats, then schooners, yachts and a whole school of whale boats, with one mast, unstepped at will, and of three and a half tons burden, used in the freighting service, and requiring nine men as crew. Drawn upon the beach lie birch-bark canoes of all sizes and conditions, from the little one of a single passenger capacity to the long dispatch boat requiring thirteen navigators. . . .The remaining surroundings of the fort are made up of a well kept vegetable garden, extensive stock corrals and a large farm under perfect cultivation.[18]

In the Red River troubles of 1869-70 Lower Fort Garry played a secondary but nonetheless important role which reflected the feelings of neutrality and even hostility toward Riel characteristic of the lower settlement of which the fort was the store and centre. William Flett, clerk in charge of the post, recorded the events of the time in the post journal. His entries display the animus of a conscientious employee who regarded the insurgents' activities as a clear-cut example of unlawful challenge to constituted authority. Flett made a note of whatever news he heard from visitors from the forks and what he saw on his own visits to the upper fort. Thus many of the major events of the rising can be traced in the journal.

The transfer of Rupert's Land without the consultation of its inhabitants from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Dominion of Canada was the basic cause of the Red River insurrection. Open resistance began on 11 October 1869, when a group of Métis led by Louis Riel stopped a Canadian government land survey which implied the transfer's validity.[1] The Métis had always held that they possessed the land by virtue of their native blood and had reiterated this belief first at Seven Oaks (1816) and second in the free-trade controversy culminating in the Sayer trial (1849). Riel's eloquent identification of the transfer as a danger to their property rights brought considerable Métis support for his position that any union with Canada must be the result of direct negotiation with the settlers.

Events moved rapidly, and on 28 October, Flett recorded in the Lower Fort Garry journal, "Reports are reaching us every day that the French half-breeds are intending to stop Governor McDougall *the new Dominion governor,* as he enters the boundaries of the settlement and return him back by an armed force. They have barracaded the public road from Pembina and are guarding it as well as other roads leading from that quarter."[2] On 3 November, he added, "heard that the half-breeds had taken possession of the Upper Fort."[3]

On 28 November, Alexander Begg went to the lower settlement with news that English- and French-speaking groups had, after much dispute, agreed to set up an executive council to negotiate with Canada. At Lower Fort Garry he met Flett, and the two proceeded to a nearby farm where they met with the settlers.[4] But the "appearance of adjustment to the disputed question" which Flett noted in the journal was fleeting.[5] On 1 December, McDougall, the Canadian governor-designate who was at Pembina, issued on his own authority a royal proclamation of the transfer of Assiniboia to Canada and at the same time gave Colonel Stoughton Dennis a commission as conservator of the peace, authorizing him to raise a force of men to disperse the "rebels." The bogus proclamation opened a rift between those settlers who did and those who did not believe in its authenticity. Riel's convention drew up a list of rights which was to serve as a basis of negotiation with Canada, and this was circulated to counteract any effect the proclamation might have.

Meanwhile, the people of the lower settlement, who viewed the whole train of events with alarm, had proceeded to organize themselves. On Saturday, 27 November, Flett "sent up Mr. Watt by a request of the Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety with a verbal message regarding the occupation of this place by armed men for its protection."[6] The journal entry for Monday, 29 November, reads, "A number of young men under the instructions of_____commenced (this evening) military drill and exercise. Very conflicting reports reach us every day regarding the movements of those who are disturbing the peace of the settlement."[7]

As soon as he had received his commission from McDougall, Dennis made for the lower fort where he anticipated strong support. Flett recorded that he "took possession of this place in the name of the Queen and Dominion Government and read the Queen's Proclamation," and in the margin, "Intends to make it his headquarters."[8] The next day there were "men coming in from all around to see Col. Dennis who is making active preparations in organizing and enrolling men to support law and order."[9]

While Dennis was continuing his preparations and supplies were "coming in for government from different parties," the problem of supplies was leading to new trouble in the upper settlement.[10] There the Métis captured Dr. John Shultz and a group of Canadians who were defending a supply of Canadian government pork stored in Shultz's house. Flett described this as causing "a great excitement."[11] Some days later he went to the upper settlement on business and was in time to see "the self-constituted provisional government flag hoisted on the flag staff within the upper fort and was present when the numerous volleys of Cannons and musketry were fired in

honor of the same, the brass band playing chorus headed it is said by one of the priests."[12] (This was, no doubt, Père Dugast's school boys' band from St. Boniface.[13])

While in Upper Fort Garry Riel was in the ascendant, at the lower fort Dennis admitted his failure to raise an adequate force among the almost neutral settlers and gave up. "Col. Dennis left here last night," wrote Flett, "his destination is uncertain. He left orders with his officers to pay off all the men who had been enrolled as well as those who had been here on guard and his instructions was carried out this evening and nearly all the men went to their respective homes."[14]

On Monday, 13 December, Lower Fort Garry's gunpowder was taken away by the settlers, probably to hide it from Riel.[15] On Tuesday the last "government officials" left. Flett decided to tighten control in the uneasy settlement and on Thursday stopped all liquor sales.[16] This attempt at prohibition was unsuccessful as explained in the following journal entry:

A party with George Calder and Thomas Syms at their head came and threatened if we would not sell them any rum they would forcibly take it consequently in consideration of this troubled times we thought it advisable to sell to every man according to his means of purchasing the same.[17]

There now arrived in the settlement three good-will ambassadors sent out by Sir John A. Macdonald to quiet apprehensions as best they could. One of these was Donald Smith, resident governor of the Company in Montreal. Smith manoeuvred Riel into allowing him to speak to an assembly of the people. "Mr. Boyd brought a verbal message requesting all loyal settlers to go to the upper fort to attend a general meeting of the settlement," wrote Flett on Tuesday, 18 January.[18] At the meeting, Riel proposed the election of a convention of 20 English-speaking and 20 French-speaking settlers to consider Smith's oration. On Monday, 24 January, Flett recorded, "Meetings were held today to elect delegates from the different parishes to confer with the French (tomorrow) regarding the present troubles in the settlement."[19] The convention duly met and accepted Smith's proposal that they send delegates to negotiate with the Canadian government at Ottawa.

While events were thus proceeding favourably, there was a number of jail breaks by prisoners captured in the fight for the government pork. A small band of Canadians led by a reluctant Colonel Boulton, who had come to Red River with the surveyors, set out from Portage La Prairie to liberate the remaining prisoners. When they arrived in the settlement they found that the last of the prisoners had been released, but they were themselves arrested and marched to the cells of Upper Fort Garry. Boulton was condemned to death. The principal of the escaped prisoners was Dr. Shultz; the search for him now led to an interesting sequence of events at the lower fort.

On Sunday, 20 February, according to Alexander Begg, "An expedition of over fifty men on horseback was started down the settlement under charge of Le Pine & Isidore Goulait to search for Dr. Shultz. . . . The party in search of Dr. Shultz found his wife in the house of John Tait – but no Dr. could be found. . . .Alex. Fisher and another man went down to the Stone Fort recon[n]oitering – they visited the Indians in that direction. Some told them there were 60 men in the Lower Fort and they were returning to give Riel that information when they met Myles McDermott who took them to the Stone Fort and showed them the contrary."[20] Flett noted the incident in his journal.

The following day, Monday, 21 February, Flett wrote in the margin of his journal, as if it were a late addition to a previous entry, "Comm. D.A. Smith and Archdeacon McLean came down this evening to consult with influential parties about quieting the troubles if possible."[21] That same evening, having received word that it was not garrisoned, Riel determined to pay a surprise visit to the lower fort, one of the few possible hiding places for Dr. Shultz which had not been searched. Begg described the incident in his journal.

Last evening there was a general pressing in of horses by the French – stables were visited in the neighbourhood of the town and wherever found horses were taken off without leave or license. This was preparatory to another expedition to hunt up Shultz – a large party headed by Riel himself having set out for the Stone Fort last night. They returned this morning about half past eight O'Clock without having found him they were in search of. They took with them Mr. John Tait whom they restored to his home. While down the settlement they visited and ransacked the Stone Fort – taking the keys of all but the provision store away with them when they left. . . .It is. . .said

that Riel while down on the expedition last night was disguised so that his best friend would not have known him – the disguise was said to consist partly of a long red beard.[22]

The report of the disguise is probably true since Flett did not recognize Riel in the group and merely noted, "A party of French came down numbering about between 60 and 70."[23]

The midnight ride of the red-bearded Riel has great romantic potential in the hands of a storyteller of even shambling imagination. More easily enjoyed than believed is Sheriff Inkster's later recollection that "Riel pushed into the Archdeacon's bedroom, thinking Schultz might be the occupant, pulled the bedclothes roughly from the bed and frightened the Archdeacon nearly out of his wits."[24]

Did Riel talk with Donald Smith? Folk legend attaches great importance to a "midnight interview" in which Riel could not win Smith's support and left the fort resigned to the failure of his mission.[25] But Smith and Riel had frequent opportunity to talk, and it is not necessary to insist upon such dramatic circumstances for a confrontation. They did have one interview two days earlier, however, which has some resemblance to that of legend.

The capture of the Canadians from Portage and the intended execution of Colonel Boulton had again divided the settlement. On Saturday, 19 February, Riel had promised to spare Boulton's life in return for Smith's promise to persuade the English and English half-breed settlers to elect delegates to a second provisional government which it had earlier been agreed to establish. This is why Smith and McLean were in the lower settlement.[26] It is possible that this earlier and successful meeting between Riel and Smith was seen as a failure in the light of subsequent events and that the whole sequence was transferred in the public imagination to the lower fort.

Although the tale of a midnight interview is untrue, the two raids on the lower settlement were significant because, in the words of Alexander Begg, they "tended greatly to embitter the minds of the English settlers, as it looked like a defiance to them after the late rising against the French."[27] The mission of Smith and McLean was of the utmost importance and insured the success of the second provisional government.

Of the Portage Canadians made prisoner on 18 February, none was more troublesome than Thomas Scott, who had earlier been captured at Shultz's house and then escaped. The execution of Scott on 4 March is a blot on Riel's reputation and was directly responsible for his downfall. This was not immediately apparent. On 8 March, Bishop Taché arrived in Red River with the general amnesty of the Governor-General of Canada. He spent two nights at Lower Fort Garry while explaining events to the Indians who lived nearby.[28] On 23 and 24 March, delegates were sent to Ottawa to negotiate the entry of Assiniboia into confederation, and on 12 May, the Manitoba Act was given royal assent.

The first warnings of trouble came from Père Richot, Red River's principal negotiator, who returned to the settlement in June with news that the amnesty would not cover the execution of Scott and that English Canadians were demanding Riel's life. Then it was heard that a military force was being sent to the colony with the new Lieutenant-Governor. The settlement waited.

In the third week of July, a Captain Butler of the 69th British Regiment arrived in Manitoba from St. Paul. On 21 July, he went to Lower Fort Garry where he remained for two days. After a brief trip to the upper fort to see Riel, he returned, engaged a canoe and hastened to Fort Alexander to meet Colonel Wolsley and the troops who were coming by the Canadian route.[29] On 26 July, Mr. Boyd and Reverend Gardener followed with a brigade of boats.[30] Nearly a month later Flett recorded with much satisfaction, "This morning Mr. Smith with Col. Wolsley with the long looked for troops arrived here amidst the cheers of the settlers. After stopping for breakfast the colonel with all his detachment left here with their boats and canoes for the upper fort to dislodge the rascally rebels and to establish law and order in the country."[31]

The troops arrived at Upper Fort Garry the following day and entered without resistance. Across the river in St. Boniface, Riel remarked to two companions, "No matter what happens now, the rights of the Métis are assured by the Manitoba Act; this is what I wanted – My mission is finished."[32] Flett noted in his journal, "Riel Runs for his life the cowardly dog."[33]

On 26 August, the first detachment of volunteers arrived at Lower Fort Garry under "Colonel Waneewright." On Sunday another brigade arrived, and on Tuesday the last of this first battalion of the

Ontario Rifles camped at the lower fort for the night before moving up-river. The first company of the Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles, appeared on Wednesday, 31 August. Over the next few days the remainder of the Quebec Rifles arrived, and Flett proceeded to ready Lower Fort Garry for their winter accommodation. The stores were turned into barracks as they had been in 1846, and the troops were soon in winter quarters.[34] Lieutenant-Governor Archibald held a levee at the lower fort on Tuesday, 6 September. "A great many of the volunteer officers and most respectable of the settlers and clergy were invited to attend."[35] In the course of the next few months, Archibald spent several nights at the lower fort while passing between Winnipeg and the Indian settlement.

The presence of soldiers resulted in great animation at the fort. The old stone store was repaired and used as a barracks. The strain on facilities was apparently great, and on 19 September, Duncan McRae and Robert Clouston arrived to lay the foundations for a new storehouse, 24.5 feet by 50 feet.[36] The Company's barn was reshingled and loaded with grain taken out of the stores. Guard rooms, cells, and officers' quarters were all arranged. A small house was erected outside the fort near the forge.[37] In January, the fort became more lively still with the arrival of the battalion's brass instruments from Upper Fort Garry.[38] On 27 January, the "Varieties Club had theatricals. . .after 8 o'clock and after that the officers of the battalion had a dance."[39] It may have been the presence of troops which prompted the Hudson's Bay Company to commence brewing at the lower fort, and on 18 April 1871, the first beer was put in the cellars.[40] If this was the reason, production began a little late, for on 7 June, the troops began to leave for eastern Canada.[41]

Lower Fort Garry was not yet entirely finished with regular troops. On 4 October 1871, a proclamation was sent down from the forks "to warn all and sundry to organize and prepare themselves to arm to repel the Fenian Raid,"[42] a minor incursion into Canadian territory organized by Riel's old associate, O'Donoghue.

The effectiveness of O'Donoghue's raid was considerably lessened by Riel's support of the new government at the head of his own Métis forces.[43] The next day the fort's square was full of farmers trying to fit themselves into the pattern of military drill, just as many had done exactly two years before. On Friday, they managed to obtain 44 rifles for the protection of the fort. By Saturday, reports came that the American army had stopped the Fenians at Pembina. Nevertheless, the next morning all the volunteers were ordered to the upper fort. On Tuesday, they returned to their homes, the comic opera over.[44]

In the meantime the government had decided to garrison the forts. On 19 October, a Mr. Provost and 15 soldiers arrived at the lower fort to pass the winter, and on 2 November, Colonel Smith and Majors Irvine and Peebles came down to make arrangements to station 50 soldiers and 2 officers at the fort. On Saturday, the troops arrived at Upper Fort Garry from Canada, and on Sunday, the detachment was in the lower fort. Provost and his 15 men returned to the upper fort.[45] On 28 November, Flett was pleasantly surprised when a group of officers visiting from the upper fort gave him a set of silver plate sent by the Quebec battalion which had passed the previous winter there.[46]

So Red River colony became Manitoba; and Lower Fort Garry, which had always been a secondary post in the fur trade, was the scene of many events that marked the settlement's troubled passage from colony to province. In the years that followed, commercial activities at the fort increased as it entered that period of its history when the transportation revolution was making of it, in Donald Gunn's words, "the most important post the Hon. Company has in the country."[47]

The garrisoning of troops was only the first of many uses to be made of Lower Fort Garry by the Canadian government. On 22 May 1871, a group of officials appeared at the fort to inspect the stone store with a view to using it as a penitentiary until a more suitable structure could be erected for the purpose.[1] The penitentiary was established in the fort sometime after the Quebec Rifles left in June, 1871, and remained there until 1877. Its presence necessitated certain building modifications. A wooden stockade was placed around the prisoners' yard, both inside and beyond the fort walls. The gate that now serves the public on the northeast side was probably built at this time. The *colombage* structure by the northwest gate later came to be used as a women's asylum.[2]

An event of notable importance occurred at the Stone Fort in August, 1871, when Indian Commissioner Wemyss Simpson and Lieutenant-Governor Archibald negotiated the young Dominion's first Indian treaty. The treaty with the Chippewa and Swampy Cree was an essential prerequisite to more extensive settlement of the West. Archibald had reported to Joseph Howe, Secretary of State for Provinces, that the Indians had "interfered with emigrants, warning them not to come on the ground outside the Hudson's Bay Company surveys."[3] They were "very much excited on the subject of their lands," Simpson recorded.[4] Lower Fort Garry was chosen as the site for the negotiations as being that place nearest the Indian settlement affording pleasant accommodation.

On Monday, 24 July, Flett recorded in the journal that the Queen's representatives, "Governor Archibald and his family with the Indian Commissioner W. Simpson Esquire, Provincial Secretary Howard and several other gentlemen arrived here this evening preparatory to the negotiations that have been appointed to take place with the Indian tribes of this province tomorrow."[5] Thirty-five troops were brought down to invest the proceedings with a martial air and fifteen of these remained until the negotiations were concluded.[6] The meetings were held outside the fort near the north bastion in an area now traversed by the main highway.[7] On Tuesday, "The Indians collected here were about six hundred but owing to a great number not being yet present the negotiations after some parley was put off till the twenty-seventh."[8] On Thursday, "The Governor and Commissioner had a parley with the Indians."[9] Archibald opened the negotiations with a fine speech. "Your Great Mother, the Queen," he began, "wishes to do justice to all her children alike. She will deal fairly with those of the setting sun, just as with those of the rising sun."[10] According to Flett, "nothing was done further than talking. They are all to assemble again tomorrow at 10 o'clock."[11] On Friday, negotiations continued until interrupted by rain at two o'clock. Meetings, continued on Saturday and Monday, but on Tuesday were suspended while Archibald was absent. On Wednesday, negotiations reached a temporary impasse.[12] "Governor Archibald came down last evening," wrote Flett, "and he with the commissioner and their assistants held meetings twice with the Indians today but without any favourable result as nothing was settled."[13] The following day, 3 August 1871, terms were agreed upon and the treaty was signed.[14]

In addition to agreements on money payments and the extent of land grants, however, certain verbal promises were made, and these were not completely fulfilled. Resulting Indian dissatisfaction was only accentuated by the more generous terms given other tribes in later treaties. Thus in 1875, the annuities were increased from three dollars per person to five, and chiefs were given twenty-five dollars and a suit of clothing every three years.[15] This example of Canadian niggardliness was only a portent. The Dominion's relationship with western Indians begun so auspiciously amid feathers and resplendent uniforms under the creamy walls of Lower Fort Garry deteriorated soon enough in the depression-wrought tragedies of the 1880s.

A new province had been established in the Northwest, but a province that bore curiously little resemblance to its elder partners in confederation. Tiny Manitoba was held in tutelage by the central government through the agency of the Lieutenant-Governor. This control was reinforced through the departments of the Interior, Indian Affairs, and Justice.

The signing of Indian Treaty No. 1 and the establishment of the penal system symbolized by the penitentiary at Lower Fort Garry were only the first elements of the systematic extension of Canadian authority across the ocean-like expanse of the prairies. Economic control was to be secured by the projected Pacific Railway. Military and judicial control were in fact prerequisites to the extension of the Canadian economy into the Northwest.

The Dominion government had been shaken by the Red River troubles of 1869-70 and did not remain untaught by its experience. The lesson that the Northwest was not an abstract entity to be bought or sold but a heterogeneous and complex society living in a territory of infinite promise was not lost on the sagacious Sir John A. Macdonald. The passing of the Manitoba Act, the conciliatory policy of Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, and the work of Wemyss Simpson were all part of the new and more realistic approach to the Northwest. The creation of the North-West Mounted Police naturally follows these events as the extension of this policy to the remaining Indian lands of British North America.

The time lag between the military and economic penetration of the Northwest was not foreseen by Macdonald. The unfortunate "Pacific Scandal," the subsequent collapse of the Liberal-Conservative government, and the instability of the international money market stalled the extension westward of railway facilities. When the Macdonald government returned to power in 1878, it seemed to have forgotten the lessons of 1869. The government obtained treaties from the various Indian tribes of the Northwest, but continued to neglect their needs, invoking insurrection once more. But before that day there occurred one of the great odysseys of Canadian history, the 1874 trek of the Mounted Police across the plains to the Whoop-up country. The first Mounties arrived at Lower Fort Garry to begin their training in October, 1873.

Lieutenant Colonel W. Osborne Smith, an officer of the militia established in Manitoba, was made temporary commander of the new police force, charged with preparing for its accommodation and organizing the first divisions which were to arrive late in 1873. On 16 December, Commissioner French arrived from the East to take command of the force.[1]

The first problem was to find barracks, and Smith soon determined that Lower Fort Garry was the most suitable place to organize and train the large group of men and horses expected at any time. A large three-storey fur and pemmican warehouse in the northeast corner of the fort next to the river wall was the first building taken over.[2] As luck would have it, the Hudson's Bay Company was just finishing a new sales shop, a thoroughly modern structure with large windows and a spacious interior. Unabashed by the presumption of his request, Smith asked for the new building as an auxiliary barracks and he got it.[3] There remained only to quarter the officers; and, to French's disgust, this was accomplished by transforming the attic of the Big House into a barracks by means of "wooden partitions which do not reach the ceilings."[4] Several small outbuildings were added: behind the warehouse barracks, which itself was renovated, were built a kitchen, a washroom and a latrine. A kitchen and washroom, smaller in size, were also built behind the new barracks and in addition, the barracks itself required certain alterations. The building near the rear (landward) gate, which had been used as a canteen by the Quebec battalion, became the hospital and canteen. Only interior renovations were made to the structure, except that a kitchen, washroom, water closet, and covered passageway were added. Interior alterations were also made in the guardroom at the river gate.[5] Outside the fort extensive new stables with harness and forage rooms were built.[6] The barracks were just completed when the troops arrived, and the stable accommodations not until sometime later.[7]

Smith also saw to the delivery of clothing and equipment from the militia stores in Ottawa. Lacking any semblance of a uniform, the police had to be content during that first winter with odd articles of clothing. A variegated shipment of military issue failed to reach them before the freezeup sealed off the new province from the rest of Canada.[8] Fifty Snider carbines and fifty short rifles were provided. Old military saddles "with high wooden cantles" were sent out, although a lighter saddle was immediately demanded by French.[9] Food was provided by a contract with the Hudson's Bay Company.[10]

The first horses procured by Smith were of Red River breed and stood only between 14 and 15 hands,[11] but more elegant mounts came with the force's "left wing" organized in Toronto. According to Sam Steele, they did not fare well in the rigours of the prairie climate.[12] The first 40 police arrived in Winnipeg on 21 October and were carried to the lower fort by steamer on the following day.[13] On 26 October, 60 more men arrived at Lower Fort Garry.[14] The last of the police arrived at their new barracks on Hallowe'en.[15] The force was organized into three divisions, A and C under superintendents Young and Windsor occupying the pemmican warehouse, and B under Superintendent MacLeod, living in the sales shop.[16] Given the weekend to orient themselves, the men were sworn into the force on Monday, 3 November 1873, at noon. Smith came down from Winnipeg to administer the oath.

Captain Jarvis had been placed in charge of the police at the Stone Fort and instructed to "have the forms filled in" and to order the men "to be present in Barracks at noon for the purpose of being inspected by me and properly attested."[17] Details are incomplete. Sam Steele stated that "each man was given a warrant with his name and rank, the first and last issued to the force."[18] Longstreth states that each division in turn paraded before Smith and signed a single sheet of paper headed, "Mounted Police Force of Canada." It bound the recruits for three years to obey and perform all lawful orders. According to Longstreth, "[Henry] Griesbach signed first, Percy R. Neale second, Samuel B. Steele third; whereupon 'A' and 'B' and 'C' added their signatures, very legibly for cold fingers and quite as if nothing were happening for the history of Canada."[19]

The force lost no time in becoming fully organized and establishing a training program. Subinspector Walsh took on the duties of riding master, adjutant, and veterinarian. Greisbach was in charge of discipline, and instructed foot drill in the fort's square. Sam Steele was in charge of "bronco-busting," and teaching recruits to ride. Jarvis remained in command in French's absence.[20]

Surprising as it seems in view of the force's later prowess, the bulk of the first recruits could not ride. Shortly after his arrival in Manitoba, French reported to Ottawa that "Although the act specifies that all men joining the Force should be able to ride, I find that very few really can do so, the officers who enlisted the men state that they had no means of finding out whether the men could or could not ride."[21] Sam Steele records the difficulty encountered in turning the raw recruits into a body of cavalry:

I took over the breaking of the horses and instructed the N.C.O.'s and men in riding. Our work was unceasing from 6 a.m. until after dark. I drilled five rides per day the whole of the winter in an open menage, and the orders were that if the temperature were not lower than 36 below zero the riding and breaking should go on.

With very few exceptions the horses were bronchos which had never been handled, and none but the most powerful and skilful dared attempt to deal with them. Even when we had them "gentled" so as to let recruits mount, the men were repeatedly thrown with great violence to the frozen ground.[22]

The regimen maintained by the force was taxing in the extreme, every minute of the day from dawn to dusk being accounted for.[23] Thus the core of the force was tempered.

Daily routine was punctuated with some small pleasures. Sam Steele records that, "Although we had much work at Stone Fort, there were some amusements, such as balls, parties and rifle matches; but with the thermometer in the thirties below zero there was little pleasure in shooting. There was a Quadrille Club for the N.C.O.'s and men."[24] Turner mentions skating on the river as the chief diversion.[25]

The first patrol undertaken by the Mounted Police set out from the Stone Fort. The Force's official historian records the event as follows:

Early in December word reached the Stone Fort that several whisky traders were operating among Indians on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg. Commissioner French took steps to investigate, intending, if possible, to arrest the men and bring them in for trial. Superintendent Macleod was assigned to the case.

A sergeant and three constables, one from each of the three troops, were chosen and given several days of instruction and practice in snowshoeing, under the supervision of Macleod, who was an expert. The little party set out in horse-drawn bobsleighs, followed by two dog teams hauling toboggans loaded with tents, blankets and food. At the mouth of the Red River, they strapped on their snowshoes, and by hard travelling, camping by night in the shelter of the woods, reached the traders' headquarters — a small log shack. Six men were taken into custody, and about ten gallons of liquor found on the premises were spilled. The

Stone Fort was reached the day before Christmas.

The first patrol by the North West Mounted Police had been accomplished successfully.[26]

The police remained at Lower Fort Garry until 7 June 1874, when in Steele's words they left for Dufferin "with considerable regret, but with high hopes"[27] to meet the remainder of the force coming from Toronto.

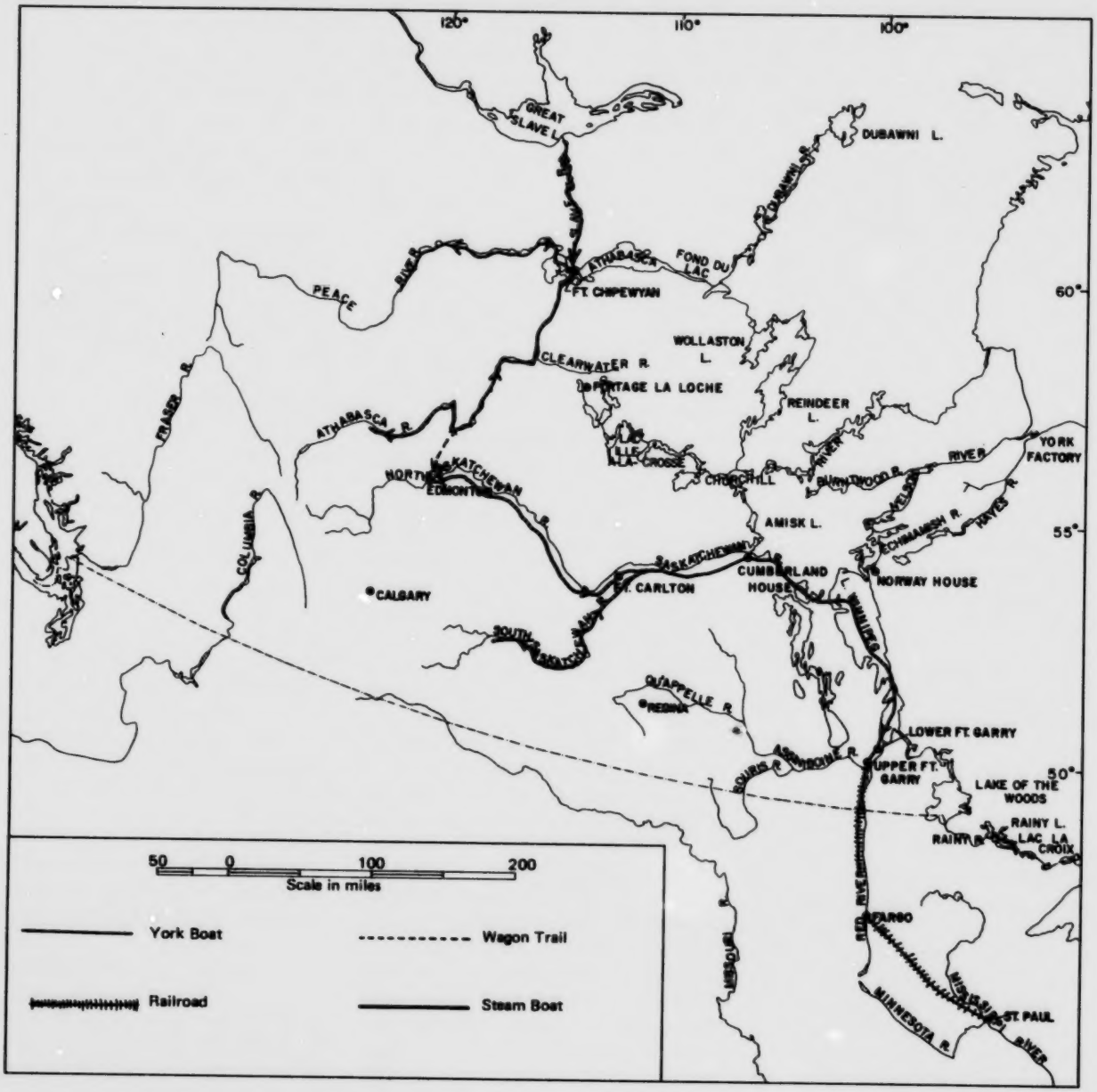
The reader will remember that by 1875, the traditional trunk route from York Factory to Norway House had been superceded by the St. Paul trail, and that this greatly enhanced the position of Lower Fort Garry in the freighting system of the Hudson's Bay Company. A second transportation revolution beginning in 1877 and completed by 1893 changed both the routes and technology of transport in the Northwest. This period of startling transformation was the railway age, and its advent brought the steady decline and obsolescence of Lower Fort Garry. The technological demands of the paddle-wheeler gave way to those of the locomotive; and, once it was decided that the transcontinental line would pass through Winnipeg rather than Selkirk, it was clear that primacy in the fur trade belonged to the old seat of the Company at the forks.

In Minnesota, the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, chartered in 1857, had by 1870 laid rail from St. Paul on the Mississippi to Breckenridge on the Red.[1] In the financial panic of 1873, the badly run firm went bankrupt.[2] But its 217 miles of rusty track which held the promise of a 2,500,000 acre land grant in Minnesota were to be the foundation of railroading in western Canada. At that time, all freighting for the Hudson's Bay Company between St. Paul and Winnipeg was carried on by the steamboats of the Red River Transportation Line, a company owned by two former Canadians living in St. Paul, Norman W. Kittson, the Hudson's Bay Company's old rival, and James J. Hill.[3] Kittson, Hill and the Hudson's Bay Company's chief commissioner, Donald Smith, foresaw that they could themselves establish the first rail connection between Winnipeg and St. Paul if they could buy the St. Paul and Pacific at a good price and make it the nucleus of a new system of north-south orientation.[4]

Smith interested his cousin, George Stephen, president of the Bank of Montreal, in the scheme with the result that he, together with Stephen, R.B. Angus, general manager of the bank, Kittson and Hill formed a group which, with the financial backing of the bank, took an option to purchase the line from the Dutch bondholders. By adding a loan from the bank to what they could raise from their own capital, the group was able to complete the line to the Canadian border before the end of December, 1878, thus securing the land grant. They then formed a new company, the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad, which paid for the bonds and took over the St. Paul and Pacific together with its land grant.[5]

At the same time the Mackenzie government, which had succeeded the Macdonald administration in 1873, was building a transcontinental in its own way – by "bits and pieces." Smith, now M.P. for Selkirk, was instrumental in assuring that one of these bits and pieces was a branch line from Selkirk to the American border via Winnipeg, through which it was proposed the transcontinental would run. It was for this line that the first locomotive in the Canadian West, the *Countess of Dufferin,* arrived at Winnipeg on a barge pushed by the Red River Transportation Line's steamer *Selkirk* on 9 October 1877.[6] The "branch line" was completed and joined to the St. Paul and Pacific in 1878 before the main line was

4 Transportation routes of the fur trade, 1880-93, by steamboat, Red River cart, York boat, and railway.



even begun. The new St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba obtained running rights on its track, although the Macdonald government cancelled this arrangement when it returned to office.[7]

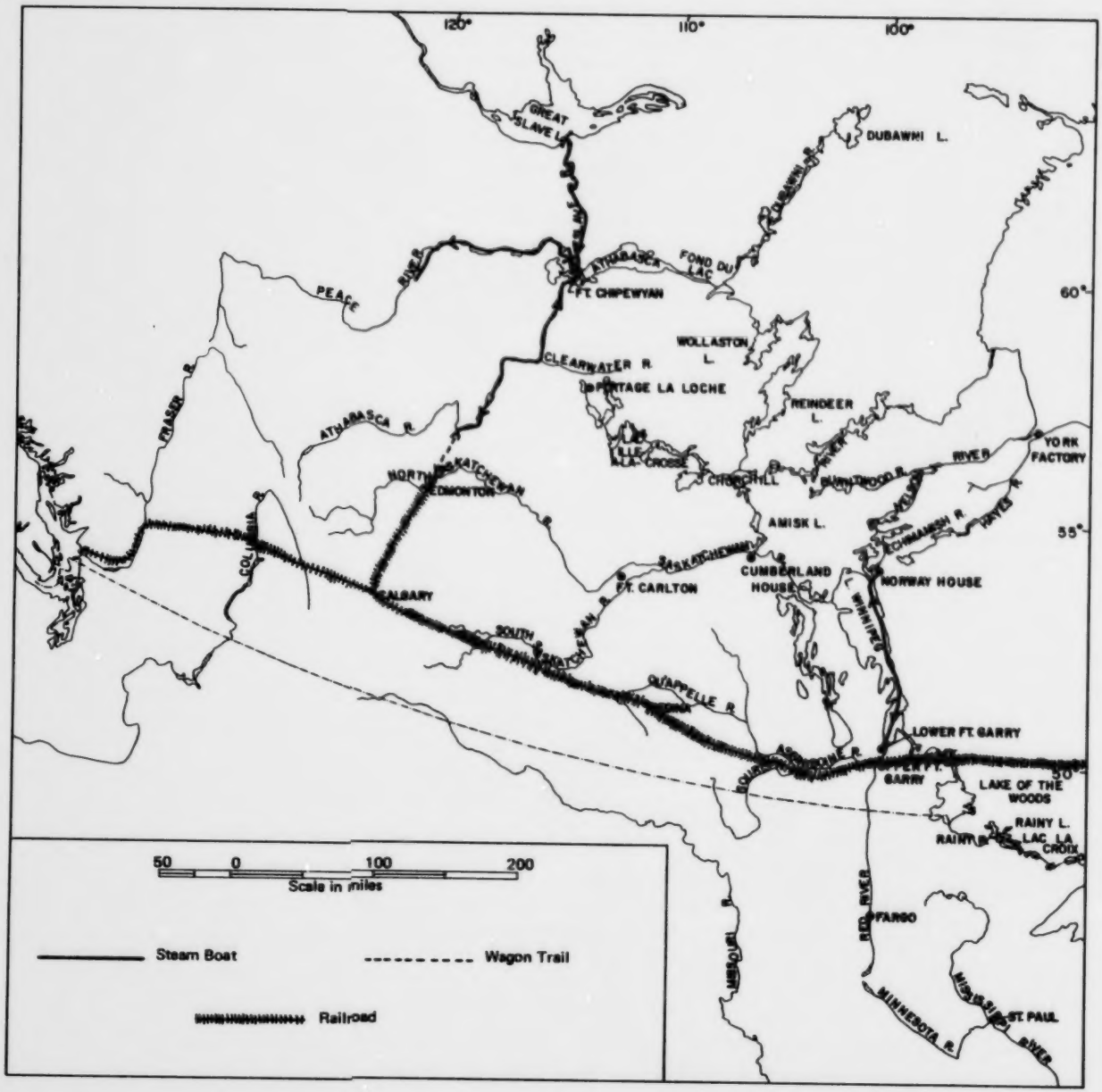
Smith, Stephen and their friends made a great deal of money, and it was J.H. Pope's advice to John A. Macdonald to interest them in building the transcontinental main line before they invested their profits elsewhere. Macdonald succeeded. On 21 October 1880, the Stephen group together with Duncan McIntyre of the Central Canada Railway and a number of European banking houses contracted to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. The efforts of financiers, contractors, engineers, railroaders and navvies brought the venture to a successful conclusion, and the last spike was driven at Craigellachie Pass on 7 November 1885.[8]

The railroad from St. Paul to Winnipeg had replaced the steamboats on Red River, which were subsequently warped over Grand Rapids and used on the Saskatchewan where the *Northcote* was already in use.[9] The *Lily* was added to the fleet for use on the South Saskatchewan. Accordingly changes occurred in the pattern of transport into the northern fur regions. After 1880, goods were no longer shipped over the Methey Portage. Cumberland House, Fort Carlton, and Edmonton were all on the new Saskatchewan River trunk line and it was from these three posts that goods were shipped into the north.[10] The railroad to Regina rendered the steamboats on the Assiniboine obsolete, and the same thing would happen again when railways secured the northern hinterland by means of branch lines. On 10 October 1890, a line was completed from Regina to Prince Albert, thus eclipsing Fort Carlton. Subsequently a line was extended from Calgary to Edmonton. Edmonton proved to be a more suitable depot than Prince Albert because of easy access to the northern river system from Athabaska Landing which was reached by a wagon road. From Athabaska Landing, goods could be shipped north to Fort Chipewyan and thence still further north via the Slave River or west on the Peace. By 1893, steamboat service on the Saskatchewan River had ended. The paddle-wheelers retreated before the advance of the locomotive as they had done twice before and as the cart trains had done before them, finding a last refuge on the Athabaska and the Mackenzie.[11]

Confederation, the railroad and immigration combined to change the character of the West and the conditions of the Hudson's Bay Company's trade. The development of a stable agricultural economy relieved the Company of the old problem of provisioning. Except in the northernmost regions, merchandise was shipped in freight cars owned and operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway instead of river steamers maintained by the Company. The speed and certainty of communications made it unnecessary to keep large inventories of goods on hand. In the south, the merchandising methods required to serve a settled population rendered trading forts obsolete. Upper Fort Garry was sold and demolished in 1882. The warehouses, the sales shop, the farm and the shipbuilding yard of the lower fort had become a liability.

In 1911 a "northern dog team driver cracked his whip and with a loud 'marche', swung his huskies proudly and for the last time round the crescent inside the fort to the sales shop. There, meeting a Company trader, he re-enacted a scene which had taken place in the fort for 80 years and so trading ended at Lower Fort Garry."[12] Clerk John Stanger closed and locked the old Stone Fort. Conscious of the fort's historic character, the Company offered it to the governments of both Manitoba and Canada, but neither would at that time accept the responsibility of custodianship. Nonetheless, Lower Fort Garry was destined for the most gracious retirement ever accorded a trading post.

5 Transportation routes of the fur trade, 1894-1913, by steamboat, Red River cart, or railway.



Lower Fort Garry lay deserted for two years, and so it may have remained but for still another transportation revolution. The founding in 1903 of the Ford Motor Company serves as a symbolic date for the beginning of this new era. Throughout the first decade of the 20th century, automobile enthusiasm spread rapidly across the continent. At the same time, Canadian society experienced a reawakened interest in the "pastoral theme," as exemplified by the city dweller's desire to "return" periodically to a rural setting. The conjunction of the mass production of automobiles and this penchant to visit the countryside made possible the reopening of Lower Fort Garry in 1913. The fort was leased to a group of Winnipeg business and professional men incorporated as the Motor Country Club. A nine-hole golf course was established south of the fort; the canteen-kitchen-hospital building became a stable; the old stone store-penitentiary a shower and locker room, the chief dwelling a club house. The club's chefs achieved a wide reputation for excellence. For half a century, members and distinguished guests enjoyed the leisured peace of the old Stone Fort. However, the increasing historical consciousness of the Canadian people prompted the Hudson's Bay Company to offer the fort as a gift to the nation. On 17 January 1951, Lower Fort Garry became a National Historic Park.[1] The Motor Country Club's lease terminated in 1963, and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development proceeded toward the restoration of the fort as a monument to the fur trade in Canada.

Endnotes

Introduction

1 William L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), pp. 61-7.

2 For information on the background and *milieu* of Lower Fort Garry, in addition to the above, *see* R. Glover, "The Difficulties of the Hudson's Bay Company's Penetration of the West," *Canadian Historical Review,* Vol. 29, No. 3 (September 1948), pp. 240-54; Arthur S. Morton, "The Place of the Red River Settlement in the Plans of the Hudson's Bay Company," *Canadian Historical Association, Annual Report, 1929,* p. 105; Frank G. Roe, *The North American Buffalo; A Critical Study of the Species in its Wild State* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951); W.L. Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River Colony," *Canadian Historical Review,* Vol. 30, No. 4 (December 1949), p. 316.

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1 Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter cited as HBCA), Governor George Simpson Journals, p. 72, first version, D.3/2.

2 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories - George Simpson (hereafter cited as London Inward), Simpson's Dispatch, 18 July 1831, p. 377, A.12/1. The St. Andrew's Rapids are those referred to.

3 Ibid., p. 397, A.12/1. This reveals Simpson's apprehensions with regard to the colonists; Arthur S. Morton, *Sir George Simpson, Overseas Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company; A Pen Picture of a Man of Action* (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1944), Ch. 9.

4 Margaret A. MacLeod, *Lower Fort Garry* (Winnipeg: Privately printed, 1957), p. 6.

5 R. Harvey Fleming and E.E. Rich, eds., *Minutes of Council, Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-1831* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1940), p. 444.

6 HBCA, Governor George Simpson Correspondence Books Outward (General) (hereafter cited as Simpson Outward), Simpson to Christie, 10 July 1837, D.4/23.

7 HBCA, London Inward, Simpson's Dispatch, 18 July 1831, A.12/1.

8 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Bishop of Juliopolis, 16 March 1835, D.4/21.

9 Margaret A. MacLeod, "The City That Never Was," *The Beaver,* Outfit 281 (September 1950), p. 12.

10 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Cary, 28 February 1838, D.4/23.

11 Margaret A. MacLeod, "The City That Never Was," *The Beaver,* Outfit 281 (September 1950), p. 15.

12 James Hargrave, *The Hargrave Correspondence, 1821-1843* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), pp. 159-60, John Charles to James Hargrave, December 1834, "Premier" refers to Simpson and "Governor" to Governor Christie of Assiniboia. This suggests that Christie played some kind of supervisory role in the construction of Upper Fort Garry, perhaps helping to design it. Folk tradition ascribes the design of Lower Fort Garry to Christie as well, but whether this is indeed so remains to be proven.

13 Margaret A. MacLeod, "The City That Never Was," *The Beaver,* Outfit 281 (September 1950), p. 15.

14 Ibid.

An Explorer and a Recorder

1 Alexander Simpson, *Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic Discoverer* (London: Bentley, 1845), p. 257; George Pendleton, "HBC Explorers: Thomas Simpson, Explorer of the Western Arctic Coast," *The Beaver,* Outfit 259 (December 1928), pp. 107-9; Douglas MacKay and W. Kaye Lamb, "More Light on Thomas Simpson," *The Beaver,* Outfit 269 (September 1938), pp. 26-31; Thomas Simpson, *Narrative of the Discoveries on the North Coast of America* (London: Bentley, 1843).

2 W. Stewart Wallace, ed., *The Macmillan*

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3 George Bryce, *The Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company* (Toronto: Briggs, 1900), p. 437.

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1 HBCA, London Inward, Simpson's Dispatch, 18 June 1846, A.12/3.

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7 Ibid.

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2 Ibid., p. cii.

3 Ibid., p. c.

4 Ibid., p. cvii.

5 John Rae, *John Rae's Correspondence with the Hudson's Bay Company on Arctic Exploration, 1844-1855* (London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1953), p. 220.

6 David Anderson, *Notes of the Flood at Red River, 1852* (London: Hatchard's, n.d.), p. 220.

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1 W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 84.

2 Robert M. Ballantyne, *Hudson Bay; or Everyday Life in the Wilds of North America During Six Years Residence in the Territories of the Hon. Hudson Bay Company* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1916), pp. 98-100; Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada, an Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 291.

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19 Ibid., p. 53; but Robert Campbell's Journal (p. 175) contradicts this.

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22 Ibid., 29 August 1871.

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2 Manitoba. Public Archives, Samuel Taylor's Journal, 1863-1867.

3 Ibid., p. 25.

4 HBCA, Journal.

5 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Cary, London, 28 February 1838, D.4/23.

6 Roderick Campbell, "Reminiscences of H.B.C. Pioneers: Alexander Lillie," *The Beaver,* Vol. 4, No. 1 (October 1923), pp. 16-7.

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8 Manitoba. Public Archives, "Survey of Jan. 1, 1875 by A.H. Vaughan, Deputy Surveyor." (Photostat of map.)

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10 HBCA, Journal, 7 April 1869, 26 April 1869.

11 Ibid., 26 April 1869, 19 November 1871.

2 Ibid., 19 October 1869, 4 April 1870.
3 Manitoba. Public Archives, Samuel Taylor's Journal, September 1863.
4 Ibid., November 1865, p. 25.
5 HBCA, London Inward, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 23 July 1846, A.12/3.
6 HBCA, Journal, 14 November 1870.
7 Ibid., 18 April 1871; *see also* Manitoba. Public Archives, Archibald Papers, Spence, Collector of Customs, to Lt. Gov. Archibald, 9 March 1871.
8 Henry M. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 80-1. "Whale boats" refers to York boats.

A Role Against Riel

1 The present account follows those of G.F.G. Stanley in his *Louis Riel* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963) and *The Birth of Western Canada* (London: Longmans, Green, 1936).
2 HBCA, Journal, 28 October 1869.
3 Ibid., 3 November 1869.
4 Alexander Begg, *Red River Journal and Other Papers Relative to the Red River Resistance of 1869-70* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1956), pp. 188-9.
5 HBCA, Journal, 28 November 1869.
6 Ibid., 27 November 1869.
7 Ibid., 29 November 1869.
8 Ibid., 1 December 1869.
9 Ibid., 2 December 1869.
10 Ibid., 4 December 1869.
11 Ibid., 6 December 1869.
12 Ibid., 10 December 1869.
13 G.F.G. Stanley, *Louis Riel* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963), p. 155.
14 HBCA, Journal, 11 December 1869.
15 Ibid., 13 December 1869.
16 Ibid., 16 December 1869.
17 Ibid., 17 December 1869.
18 G.F.G. Stanley, op. cit., p. 90; HBCA, Journal, 18 January 1870.
19 Ibid., 24 January 1870.
20 Alexander Begg, op. cit., pp. 318-9.
21 HBCA, Journal, 21 February 1870.
22 Alexander Begg, op. cit., p. 320.
23 HBCA, Journal, 22 February 1870.
24 Robert Watson, *Lower Fort Garry, a History of the Stone Fort* (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1928), p. 36. Inkster was certainly wrong in another recollection here recorded that "Donald A. Smith never spent a night at this time away from the Upper Fort." In telling this tale Watson admits, "Close investigation hardly bears this out."
25 Ibid., p. 35.
26 G.F.G. Stanley, *Louis Riel* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963), p. 109.
27 Alexander Begg, *The Creation of Manitoba* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1871), p. 295.
28 HBCA, Journal, 24 March 1870.
29 Ibid., 21 July 1870, 23 July 1870.
30 Ibid., 26 July 1870.
31 Ibid., 23 August 1870.
32 G.F.G. Stanley, *Louis Riel* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963), p. 155.
33 HBCA, Journal, 24 August 1870.
34 Ibid., 26 August 1870; 28 August 1870; 30 August 1870; 31 August 1870.
35 Ibid., 6 September 1870.
36 Ibid., 19 September 1870.
37 Ibid., numerous references between 14 September and 4 November 1870.
38 Ibid., 15 January 1871.
39 Ibid., 27 January 1871.
40 Ibid., 18 April 1871.
41 Ibid., 7 June 1871.
42 Ibid., 4 October 1871.
43 *See* correspondence between Archibald and Joseph Howe in PAC, MG24, B29, Joseph Howe Papers, Correspondence, Vols. 6-10, 30.
44 HBCA, Journal, 6 October to 10 October 1871.
45 Ibid., 19 October 1871 to 20 November 1871.
46 Ibid., 28 November 1871.
47 Donald Gunn and Charles R. Tuttle, op. cit., pp. 269-70.

Government Activities at the Fort

1 HBCA, Journal, 22 May 1871.
2 Robert Watson, op. cit., pp. 43-4, 53.
3 G.F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (London: Longmans, Green, 1936), p. 208, quoting Archibald to Howe, 19 July 1871.
4 Robert Watson, op. cit., p. 45, quoting Wemyss Simpson.
5 HBCA, Journal, 24 July 1871.
6 Manitoba. Public Archives, Archibald Papers, Items 395, 402; Robert Watson, op. cit., p. 46, quoting Wemyss Simpson.
7 Watson map. Traditionally ascribed site.
8 HBCA, Journal, 25 July 1871.
9 Ibid., 27 July 1871.
10 G.F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (London: Longmans, Green, 1936), pp. 208-9.
11 HBCA, Journal, 27 July 1871.
12 Ibid., 28 July 1871 to 2 August 1871.
13 Ibid., 2 August 1871.
14 Robert Watson, op. cit., pp. 46-7, quotes Wemyss Simpson on treaty terms.
15 G.F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (London: Longmans, Green, 1936), p. 431. For treaty and verbal agreement, *see* Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1891), Vol. 1, pp. 282-5, with map of surrender territory.

The Mounties Learn to Ride

1 PAC, RG18, B3, Vol. 1, Osborne Smith's Letter Book as Acting Commissioner of N.W.M.P. The book runs from 17 October to 13 December 1873. It seems unlikely that he began his duties at such a late date.
2 Ibid., p. 8.
3 Ibid., p. 54.
4 PAC, RG18, A1, Item 70-74, Colonel French's Report on Condition of N.W.M.P., Lower Fort Garry, 7 January 1874.
5 Ibid., Vol. 2, Item 79-74, Account Statement, "The Dominion Government to A. MacArthur et Co., For building and alterations and repairs at Lower Fort Garry for Mounted Police."
6 Ibid., B1, N.W.M.P. Papers, Osborne Smith's Letter Book, pp. 72, 84, 88.
7 Ibid., pp. 34, 42-4.
8 Ibid., pp. 42-4; French, "Report."
9 Ibid., French, "Report."
10 Ibid., Smith's Letter Book, p. 7.
11 Ibid., French, "Report."
12 Samuel B. Steele, *Forty Years in Canada*

(Toronto: McClelland, Goodchild, Stewart, 1918), p. 63.
13 PAC, RG18, B1, Smith's Letter Book, p. 11.
14 HBCA, Journal, 26 October 1873.
15 PAC, RG18, B1, Smith's Letter Book, p. 42.
16 Ibid., French, "Report."
17 Ibid., Smith's Letter Book, pp. 38-9.
18 Samuel B. Steele, op. cit., p. 60.
19 Thomas M. Longstreth, *The Silent Force* (New York: Century, 1927), pp. 9-10.
20 PAC, RG18, B1, French, "Report."
21 Ibid.
22 Samuel B. Steele, op. cit., pp. 60-1.
23 John P. Turner, *The North West Mounted Police, 1873-1893* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1950), p. 99.
24 Samuel B. Steele, op. cit., p. 62.
25 John P. Turner, op. cit., p. 99.
26 Ibid., pp. 102-3.
27 Samuel B. Steele, op. cit., p. 63. At this time the police were wearing an irregular uniform consisting of "scarlet serge frocks with dark blue collars and cuffs and Canada Militia buttons — the uniform of the Toronto Military School." John P. Turner, op. cit., p. 119.

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1 W.T. Easterbrook and Hugh G.J. Aitken, *Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1956), p. 426.
2 John M. Gibbon, *Steel of Empire* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935), p. 178.
3 Ibid., pp. 176-8.
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5 W.T. Easterbrook and Hugh G.T. Aitken, op. cit., p. 427.
6 John M. Gibbon, op. cit., p. 182.
7 Donald G. Creighton, *John A. Macdonald* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955), Vol. 2, p. 287.
8 W.T. Easterbrook and Hugh G.T. Aitken, op. cit., p. 428.
9 Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 343.
10 Ibid., p. 344.
11 Ibid.
12 *Winnipeg Evening Tribune*, Magazine Section, 16 May 1931.

A Half Century of Gracious Living

1 Canada, Order in Council, P.C. 255, 17 January 1951.

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Industrial and Agricultural Activities at Lower Fort Garry

by George Ingram

Abstract

Industrial and agricultural activities which developed at Lower Fort Garry between the 1850s and the 1870s included experimental farming, boat building, brewing and distilling, and other activities involving the construction of additional buildings in and near the fort. The activities at the fort relating to provisioning and transportation are discussed in detail during the height of their development.

Toward the end of the 1860s or in the early 1870s, H. M. Robinson described the industrial activities at Lower Fort Garry at what must have been the peak of their development:

Outside the walls of the fort, but belonging to it, is situated a miniature village of many and varied industries. In neat dwellings reside the heads of the different departments of what may be termed the outdoor businesses of the company. Here dwells the chief engineer of all the steam power in use upon its ships, boats, mills, etc. Here also lives the farmer who directs the cultivation of the immense agricultural farm connected with the fort; the herdsman, who superintends the rearing and care of the droves of cattle, horses and other stock of the corporation; the miller in charge of the milling interests; the shipwright, who directs the building, launching and refitting of the company's fleet. In the rear of these dwellings are mess-rooms for the accommodation of the workmen and the residences of the different overseers. Separate a little stand the flouring-mills, brewery, ship-yards, machine shops, etc., all supplied with the latest labor-saving machinery. Scattered along the bank of the river lie moored or drawn up on the beach the miniature navy of the company; here a lake steamer, there river steamboats, then schooners, yachts and a whole school of whale boats, with one mast, unstepped at will, and of three and a half tons burden, used in the freighting service, and requiring nine men as crew. Drawn upon the beach lie birch-bark canoes of all sizes and conditions, from the little one of a single passenger capacity to the long dispatch boat requiring thirteen navigators. The steam vessels are mostly manned by Americans; the sailing craft by the Orkney servants of the company, and the whaleboats by the native halfbreeds. The birch-bark canoe is the Indians' buggy. One or two steam-tugs whistle and puff rapidly up and down the stream, towing rafts of lumber, boats laden with limestone, fire wood, etc. The remaining surroundings of the fort are made up of a well kept vegetable garden, extensive stock corrals and a large farm under perfect cultivation.[1]

It had taken over three decades for Lower Fort Garry to achieve the stage in its development which Robinson described, and after about two decades of bustling activity (the late 1850s through to the 1870s) it declined rapidly. Most of the industrial buildings had been sold off by the middle 1880s.

When Governor George Simpson began to build Lower Fort Garry in 1830-31, he planned to make it the centre of the Company's activities in the Red River district to replace the fort which had formerly stood at the forks of the Red and the Assiniboine. Almost as soon as it was finished, however, even he realized that its remoteness from the centre of the settlement and from the busy forks made it less than an ideal location for the head post of the district. Another fort, Upper Fort Garry, was built at the forks, and by the end of the 1830s, it, instead of the lower fort, was firmly established as the centre for the district. The chief factor for Red River resided there while the lower fort was placed in charge of a clerk under the jurisdiction of Upper Fort Garry.

The change in policy left the Company

with a post which served no obvious important function in spite of its attractive residence and substantial storehouses. For a decade it served a residual function, receiving the overflow from the upper fort, and providing a residence for visitors to the settlement for whom the Company was the host. Sir George Simpson preferred to stay there on his many visits to the settlement because of its remote location. It is probably for this reason that some of the meetings of the Council of the Northern Department were held there in the early years. Its storehouses were probably used for the storage of goods coming down from York Factory for which there was no room at the upper fort, and of provisions bought by the Company in the lower settlement. Its fur-trading store served only the immediate area.

Lower Fort Garry's relatively small role in the actual trade of furs contributed toward making it an important post in the provisioning of the Company. When it was decided to build a brewery and distillery in 1845, the lower fort was selected for the location of the new industry because of its remoteness from the centre of the settlement and yet relative proximity to the Company's activities there. Upper Fort Garry, enmeshed in the fur trade, would have been hampered by the presence of the distillery and the activities connected with it. By this time the storehouses of the lower fort were used to keep the many bushels of wheat and other agricultural products which the Company bought each year from the settlers to provision the trade. Again it was a more logical place to store the produce as the Company's stores at the upper fort would be filled with furs and trading goods.

Thus by the mid 1850s a definite division of function was developing for the Company's two posts in the Red River. Upper Fort Garry was the head post of the district concerned mainly with administration and the conduct of the fur trade; Lower Fort Garry was becoming more important in the provisioning of the trade.[2] However, the division was by no means cut and dried – some trade items were stored at the lower fort and some produce kept at the upper fort.

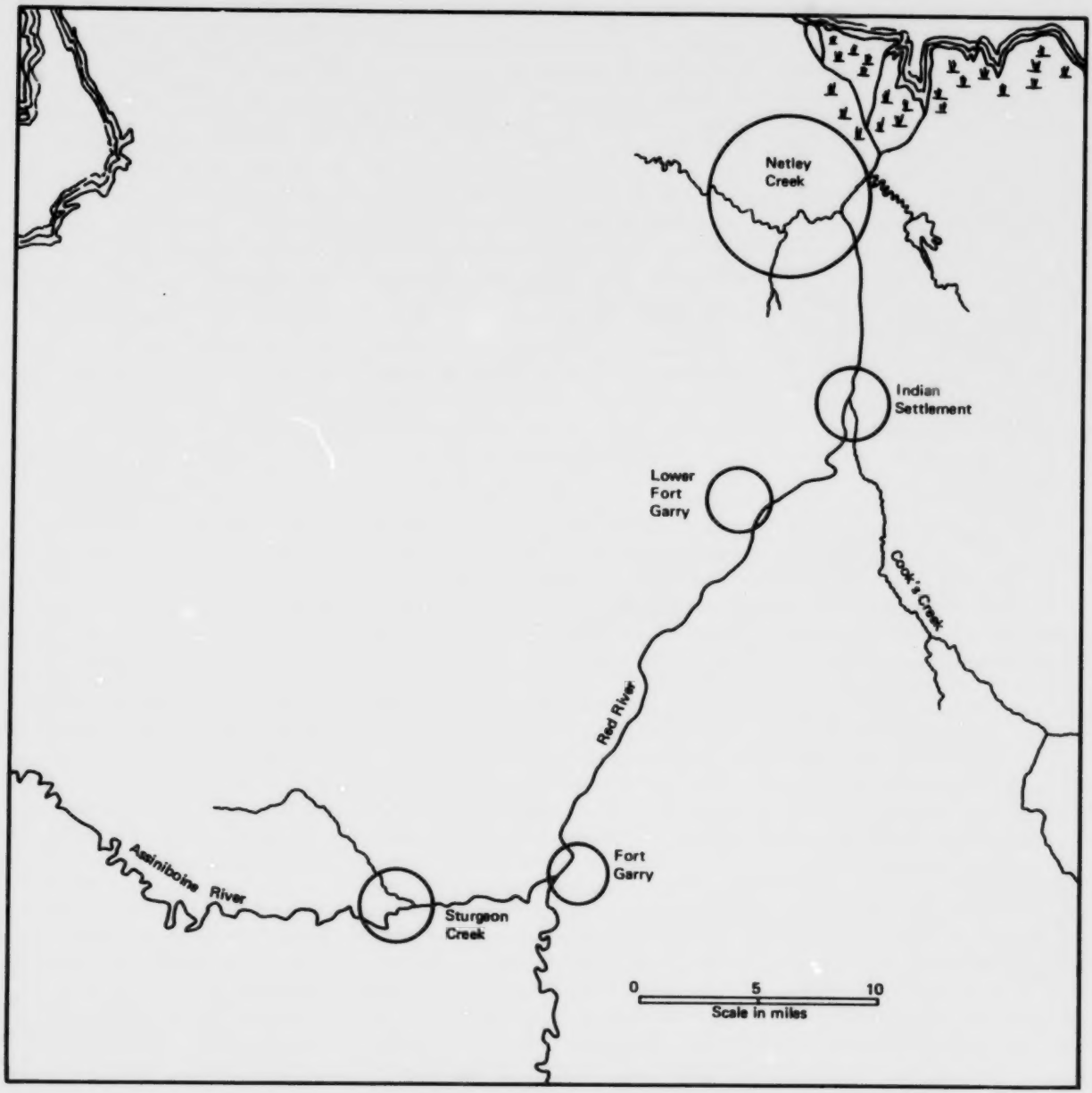
At the same time, Lower Fort Garry was developing as an important link in the transportation system of the Company. Men for the difficult brigade to York Factory and for the trip to Athabaska were recruited by the clerk in charge of the lower fort among the nearby settlers. This function increased in importance as the settlement about the lower fort grew in size.

The lower fort's activities in provisioning and transportation increased at the end of the 1850s when the change was made from the York Factory to the St. Paul route for supplying the interior; and the change made the division in function between the upper and lower forts more distinct. The trade goods were now brought in from the south and most of them were stored at the upper fort; the produce from the settlement would be bought and stored at the lower fort. When the Company decided in 1857 to establish a farm, Lower Fort Garry was the logical location, as it had always been the main provision centre for the Company in the Red River. Also it did not play an important role in the trade of furs which would be hampered by the activities of the farm. The fort's role in transportation was increased by keeping oxen there or at the lower fort's satellite stations, such as Netley Creek or Oak Point.

Ladings for the brigades would be made up by taking provisions from the lower fort and trading goods from the upper fort. For instance, the cart brigade for Saskatchewan left from the upper fort. Oxen were sent up from the lower fort to be harnessed to carts most of which were apparently kept at the upper fort. Provisions would be taken up at the same time completing the ladings which had been partially filled by the trade goods already there. On the other hand, the boats for the Saskatchewan brigade left from the lower fort. The trip men would be assembled there having been hired by the clerk at the fort. The required provisions would be loaded from the fort's stores, and trade goods from the upper fort added to the load. The bills of lading came down from the upper fort, signifying that post's role as the administrative centre of the district. The division of function necessitated daily intercourse between the two posts. Carts, boats or sleighs, depending on the season, carried goods back and forth constantly; in the 1860s letters were written daily by William Mactavish, the factor at Upper Fort Garry, giving instructions to the clerk in charge of the lower fort.

Lower Fort Garry's function had been virtually decided by the early 1860s and gradually over the next decade the

1 The Red River Settlement, 1874. Redrawn from a survey of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. ***(Public Archives of Manitoba.)***



various components were added to make up the busy scene which Robinson described. A grist mill and sawmill were built at the creek south of the fort in 1865-66 to complement the distillery, malt house and storehouse there since 1845-46. A blacksmith's forge and later a building housing a lathe were located between the creek and the fort. A men's house or barracks next to the forge accommodated the Company's many workmen. North of the fort were located the Company's stables, byres, and stockyards. Various other farm buildings were scattered about the fort area and across the road were the long, cultivated fields. These extensive facilities made the lower fort a logical place for the repair and building of boats and the Company's ships. No wonder Robinson was impressed with the busy scene at the lower fort!

The introduction of farming to Lower Fort Garry in the 1850s followed a number of similar but unsuccessful experiments by the Hudson's Bay Company in the settlement. During the 1840s, small numbers of cattle were kept at the lower fort to fill temporary demands for meat. Then in 1848, a breeding operation was established for horses and beef cattle. In the 1850s, the herd was increased considerably in size when the Company entered into land transportation and in 1857, the Company began cultivation at the lower fort.

By the time Roderick Campbell arrived at Lower Fort Garry in 1859, he found that there had recently been established "a very large farm . . . in the immediate vicinity." He later wrote that, "The experiment in agriculture proved most encouraging and the harvest was everything that could be desired." He went on to describe its appearance in glowing terms: "The golden-tinted wheat, the plump round barley, the capital potatoes and turnips, soon showed the fertile capabilities of the Red River Valley."[1] In the 1860s, another observer described the Company's enterprise as "immense."[2]

The farm at Lower Fort Garry was one of the more successful of the Company's agricultural ventures and was quite certainly one of the largest in the Northern Department. It grew out of necessity in the late 1850s and lasted only as long as the need continued – only as long as transport animals were required at Red River and the local food supply was unsatisfactory to meet the needs of the Company. Cultivation reached a peak between 1857 and 1861 and again in 1868-69. Between 1869 and 1874, only a large garden was cultivated. By the 1870s, the increasing use of steamboats on the inland waterways, the arrival of the railway in the West, and the active settlement of the plains removed the *raison d'être* of the farm.

* * *

Only gradually and with much hesitation did the Hudson's Bay Company introduce farming to the lower fort. The reluctance could be traced back to failure in previous farming experiments in the colony. There was a major difference, however, which separated the farm eventually established at the lower fort from its predecessors: the earlier farms had been established to foster agriculture and related industries in the fledgling colony; that of 1857 was developed solely to answer the needs of the Company.

Motives of altruism and self-interest blended in the Company's attempts to strengthen the economic base of the Red River Settlement.[3] In 1836, when the Governor and Committee launched its last and most ambitious experimental farm, they expressed their aims quite clearly – the farm was intended to serve as an example for the settlers, to help them adopt modern agricultural practices and eventually produce crops appropriate for an export trade. George Cary, acquainted with both "the theory and practice of agriculture" was sent out to manage the new venture. In a lengthly letter, the Governor and Committee explained their reasons for yet another farm:

It is highly desirable to establish an Export trade from the Settlement, as a source of revenue from England, and as

the Country appears to be well adapted for rearing sheep and Black Cattle, and for the growth of Flax and Hemp, we think the two latter articles, and those of Wool and Tallow (all of which can bear the expenses of transport) the most likely to yield a fair profit to the growers, we have therefore determined on establishing a farm on a large scale, and as it will be conducted on a more regular system, than the people have been accustomed to see, they will benefit greatly by the example which will there be held out, and by the information they will acquire in watching the management thereof. Towards this end, we intend sending out, by the ships of the current year, Mr. Carey, a Gentleman who understands both the theory and practice of those branches of agriculture, and with him from 12 to 15 English Farm Servants, and it is our intention to send out in a like manner, from time to time, as many Servants as can be employed to advantage at the Establishment.[4]

The Company went one step further by sending "two women" out from Canada to establish a "school of industry" for the instruction of the settlers in the processing of the products of their farming.[5]

The Company's motives were not appreciated by the settlers who soon complained that the Company was merely seeking to displace them in the supply of provisions for the fur trade. To the Company officials, this impression was regrettable, and they soon instructed those in charge at the Red River to correct the thinking of the settlers.

From several reports that have reached us there appears to be an impression on the minds of the Settlers that in forming the Agricultural establishment under the management of Captn Cary, our view is to raise grain and other provisions required for the service of the Fur trade, and thereby deprive them of the market they have hitherto had for their surplus produce. That impression is erroneous and should therefore be removed: the object of the establishment in question being to form an export trade from Red River, on a large scale in the articles of wool and Flax, for which the Country and climate are well adapted, as without an export of some description it is impossible a growing settlement can prosper.[6]

Not appreciated by the settlers and certainly not a success in producing flax and wool for export, the farm was reduced in 1840 when it was decided to maintain it purely for the sake of having a Company experimental farm in the colony:

By the General Dispatch, you will observe it is intended to reduce the experimental farm so as merely to retain the name of such an establishment, and if that name be found too expensive, we must in due time endeavor to expunge it.[7]

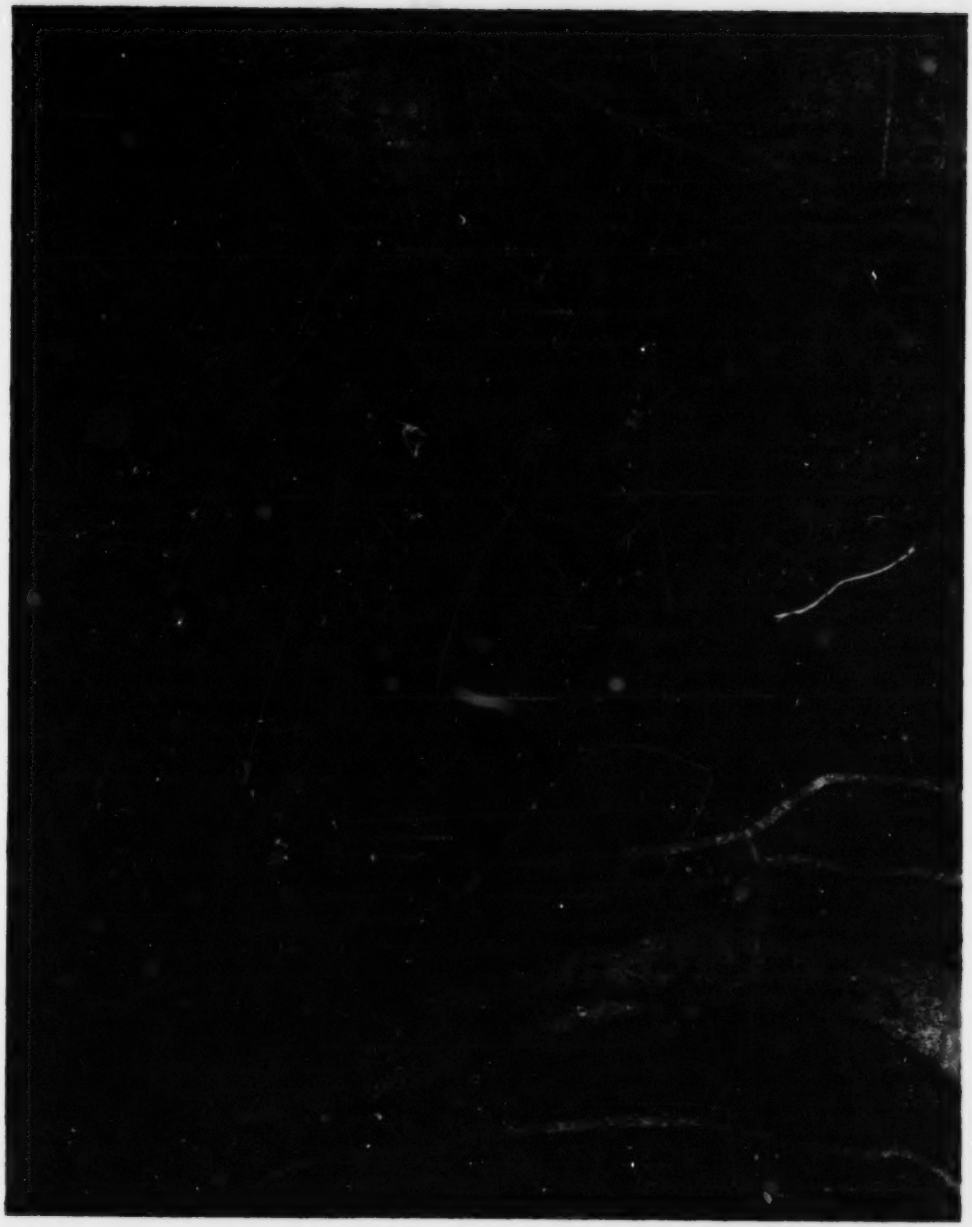
Even this formality was dropped in the following year when the experiment was abandoned and Cary was allowed to take over part of the farm as a private concern. *The Experimental Farm, which has not been productive of the benefits that were expected when it was established, although attended with considerable outlay, has been abandoned, Mr. Cary & the Servants having been permitted to retire. That Gentleman likes the country, & as he shews every disposition to render himself useful & agreeable, I let part of the Farm to him.*[8]

All had not been in vain, however, as some of those connected with the farm remained in the settlement. Captain Cary's smith made what appear to have been the first bricks in the colony a year after the farm's failure,[9] and almost 20 years later, "one of the Red River settlers who came out originally for the Company's Experimental Farm," Oliver Gowler, was described as "one of the most extensive Farmers in the Settlement."[10]

The failure of the experimental farm to provide a model for the settlers did not halt the Company's attempts to foster production in the settlement. As late as 1848, the Governor and Committee sent out seed corn, and in the following year when they sent seed wheat they noted "We are gratified to find that cultivation is extending, and will do everything in our power to encourage a spirit of agricultural industry, and indeed of any other kind of industry, in which the Settler can advantageously engage."[11] The Red River was a primary source of food staples for the fur trade, and by encouraging production in the settlement, the Company was merely attempting to strengthen one of its own sources of supply. The settlers produced a variety of provisions which could not be exported conveniently from England; in 1852, for instance, a long list of supplies was obtained from the settlement:

corned beef, cured hams, cured pork, lard, dried meat, onions, salted cabbage, potatoes, garden seeds, butter, cheese, flour, preserved eggs, biscuit, blankets

2 The farm at the lower fort, 1874. From a survey dated 1 January 1875 by A.H. Vaughan, deputy surveyor. (***Public Archives of Manitoba.***)



cloth, and coating (for weaving was done in the homes), oak boards and staves, elm and oak timber, portage straps, three oxen, fourteen sheep, two pigs.[12]

To this must be added wheat, which the Company bought in quantity.

The settlement proved to be a very fickle supplier, however, and a frustrating one to depend upon for the lifeblood of the fur trade. The settlers were often victims of their limited techniques and the least disruption by nature threw their crops into ruin. Locusts, floods, and early frosts destroyed crops all too frequently, lowering the yield to one which was inadequate to supply the settlers themselves, let alone the trade. When the crops were small, the settlers took full advantage, withholding their produce until the price rose to a higher level. The Company was then forced to look to the pemmican hunters, a declining source, and the costly importation of food to fill its needs. Occasional increases in the consumption of provisions, such as that of 1846-48 when the Sixth Regiment was stationed at Red River, also necessitated massive importation. The need to establish an adequate local food supply gradually forced the Company to use the lower fort in provisioning its enterprises.

In 1846, the Company was given the contract for supplying the mess of the Sixth Regiment after it arrived in September. The soldiers demanded fresh meat, refusing the salted beef which the Company offered in fulfilling its obligations. As the host of a force which it had been instrumental in bringing to the colony, the Company could do little but accede to the request. Cattle were bought from the settlers and kept over the winter at the lower fort and other locations in the settlement, being slaughtered only as they were needed.

All the people were exceedingly anxious for their cattle being Killed at once, *which we could not possibly do, therefore, to avoid killing too many, all the Young growing Cattle were purchased on valuation* (about 60 head) *and are now wintering at the lower fort, also with Mr. McDermot's cattle and amongst the settlers.*[13]

The policy was continued in the following year when there were about "twenty cows" at the lower fort belonging to the Company in November.[14]

The keeping of stock at the lower fort, 1846-48, was merely a temporary expedient to aid in the feeding of the troops, but in 1848, the Company added permanency to the lower fort establishment by sending out thoroughbred breeding stock in an attempt to improve the herds of the settlers. A horse — Melbourne — a mare, a bull, and two cows arrived in November. The Company's factor in Red River, Alexander Christie, suggested that they be kept at the lower fort because of its natural advantages:

The live stock arrived from England by the ship, consisting a Horse & Mare, with one Bull & two cows, were taken up by Mr. Mowat, and delivered here in perfect safety, the Groom who came out in charge of the Stock, is a very decent industrious man and apparently well qualified for the duty for which he was engaged. — I recommended that these animals should be Kept here for this winter, the hay is preferable to what is procured near the Upper Fort.[15]

The breeding stock was kept at the lower fort, where a stable was probably constructed.

The Company's horse-breeding establishment was not blessed with good fortune. Only two years after it began, the mare and her foal died at the lower fort.[16] Although Melbourne remained healthy his services were not fully exploited. The Company planned to use the horse for covering its own mares and also the mares of the settlers in return for a modest fee. Neither scheme seems to have been successful. Eden Colvile, at the lower fort in 1851, complained to Simpson of the failure of the venture as far as the Company's horses were concerned:

I have desired Mr. Black to give me in a statement regarding the mares. I believe very few have been disposed of and these few were so light that they were not able to bear the English horse. We have at present about 40 mares here [at the lower fort], *rather more than half of which have been already covered. The mare*[s] *have never been handled & we have great difficulty in managing them, as they are as wild as deer.*[17]

Even those mares which had been already covered and had produced foals presented a problem as no solution had been worked out for the disposal of the progeny.[18] As for the use of Melbourne by the settlers, Colvile had offered every inducement but the settlers still remained aloof.

I have reduced the price of the horse to the settlers, but he does not get much custom — as they get other stallions at a much cheaper rate, and they do not appear to care much for the breeding of the stallion.[19]

Three months later, Colvile was even more adamant in his condemnation of the whole scheme:

This English horse and bull are about as bad a speculation as the Company ever engaged in; and I do not think either of them pay for their keep. The settlers have sent just 17 mares to the horse, though the price of him was reduced to one pound with a shilling to the groom. He covered about 60 mares belonging to the Company, but they were so wild, never having been handled, that I understand more than half of them are not in foal.[20]

If the Company intended the project as a way of helping the settlers, they might as well abandon it in Colvile's view:

In fact, it is ridiculous attempting anything of this sort for the benefit of these people. You do not even get thanked for it. My opinion is that the horse should be sent next season to St. Louis, and sold for what he will fetch, and I think a good price may be obtained for him. You may take my word for it we shall never make a fortune by breeding horses in this country.[21]

Simpson found the want of success of the "horse breeding operations" disheartening but as usual he was reluctant to abandon a scheme. He was inclined to blame those in charge for its failure. "I think," he wrote, "it may be attributed to the indifference felt on the matter by some of those who were engaged in it & to the frequent change of plans of the different Gentlemen who have been in charge at Red River of late years."[22] Later in the same letter, he suggested an ingenious solution for the problem. Melbourne, based at Lower Fort Garry, would travel up and down the settlement offering his services. On stipulated days of each week, he would be available to the settlers' horses at various stations.[23]

Simpson's proposal does not seem to have been adopted and instead Melbourne spent the next few years travelling around the country. Although he was in the settlement and probably at the lower fort in 1855, by the fall of 1856, it was planned to send him to the Swan River district, to the "company breeding establishment at Fort Pelly." In 1858, Melbourne was still in the Swan River district. But as late as 1860, he was without a permanent home. William Mactavish wrote to Simpson asking what should be done with the big horse and suggesting that he be transferred from Fort Pelly to the Red River. Although Simpson was also at a loss for a solution, he disagreed with Mactavish's suggestion that Melbourne should be moved to the Red River.[24]

The year 1856 ended the talk of the horse-breeding establishment at Lower Fort Garry, and although horses were retained there in later years, they were kept as mounts for employees of the Company, and for working purposes.[25]

Colvile had been almost as scathing in his criticism of the English bull as he had been of Melbourne. It, too, had been little used by the settlers. "The bull," he wrote, "has had just 14 cows, and the settlers now say that he ought to be turned loose in the plains, for they do not understand, paying 5/- for him."[26] It was of little avail for the Company to attempt to do things for the settlers, he felt, as they simply did not appreciate its efforts. Simpson came forward in 1853 with an alternative, proposing that "the progeny of the English Bull and Ayrshire Cows" at the lower fort should be distributed over the country with a view to a general improvement of the Company's stock.[27] Knowing that the officers at the more remote posts would regard the beefy English cattle with a hungry eye, he went on to warn that instructions should accompany the cattle, stating that "they be taken great care of and used for the purpose intended and not as beef for the support of the people at the Posts."[28] Meanwhile, John Black arrived independently at a similar idea and suggested to Simpson that the cattle of the English breed be raised at Forts Ellice and Pelly because "the Red River cattle sell very well in the States. . . .under the stimulus of these foreign additions to the increasing domestic demand cattle will soon rise to such a figure, as to make it a matter of consequence to us to have a good stock of cattle at our command at the neighbouring Posts."[29] Black was more interested in building up a stock of cattle so the Company would not be forced to buy those of the settlers at high prices. Simpson, however, had a quite different idea in mind; he wanted to raise cattle for sale in the rich market of the northern United States pointed out by Black.

I agree with you that if more attention were bestowed on the raising of horned cattle, we might benefit by the increasing demand for Oxen & Cows at the new Settlements in the Minesota territory. It was with this in view I directed the dispersion of the progeny of the English Bull & Cows to neighbouring posts & have to beg you will give instructions on the subject to the persons in charge of posts in Red River district.[30]

As it turned out, Black's scheme was the one finally adopted. A detachment of Canadian Rifles was due to arrive in the Red River settlement in 1857, and Simpson, perhaps remembering the difficulties of provisioning the Sixth Regiment in the 1840s, suggested that the Company should accumulate a herd of cattle.

It was usual formerly to buy up beef cattle for the Company from time to time, to be fattened, and Killed as required. This, I think, was better than depending on supplies from the Settlers at the moment they are wanted. You will therefore avail yourself of any favorable opportunities that may offer of buying oxen up to the number of 50 head which may be either used at the establishment, or resold at a profit as is found necessary or advisable.[31]

Swanston, who had relieved Black at Red River, apparently anticipated Simpson, as a month later Simpson wrote back approving of Swanston's purchase of cattle: *I quite approve of what you have done to counteract the combination for raising the price of beef, i.e., buying cattle to fatten & kill as required. By my last letter you will observe I recommended that course and instructed you to buy up to 50 head of cattle of the Company's account.*[32]

These were kept at the lower fort.

The purchase of cattle in 1856 and 1857 indicated that the Company was becoming annoyed with the failure to obtain adequate supplies of provisions in the settlement at reasonable prices. In the late 1850s, this shortage of provisions and a revolutionary change in the transportation system of the Company vaulted Lower Fort Garry into prominence as a supplier of agricultural staples and as a depot for the Company's oxen.

Before 1857-58, the Red River had been supplied with goods directly from England, almost exclusively by the York Factory route. But by 1857, the demand of an "increasing business done at Red River and for the Fur Trade of the surrounding districts" began to tax that route to its very limits. It had never been satisfactory; the loss of a ship would threaten the fur trade with starvation and bring trading to a standstill. Often goods had to be left on the shore of Hudson Bay when an extra burden was added to the usual indent. The necessity of ordering goods two or three years in advance brought high overhead costs. Also, by the mid-1850s, it had become difficult to obtain men for work on the arduous brigade from Red River to the bay. For all these reasons, Simpson and William Mactavish began to look to the south as an alternate route for bringing in supplies from England. It was an obvious choice; for many years the Red River settlers had brought goods either from Pembina or directly from St. Paul. In 1858, a small indent was brought in by the New York-St. Paul route as an experiment, and the success of the venture ensured that the route would be used in the future and would eventually replace York Factory in the supply of the Red River.

To implement the transportation scheme, Simpson commissioned the firm of J.C. and H.C. Burbank in St. Paul to forward the English goods coming from New York to Red River. The Company eventually entered into partnership with the Burbanks for the purchase and operation of a steamship on the Red River to transfer the goods to the settlement; however, the Hudson's Bay Company still retained a role in the transport of goods from the south and for this would need oxen and carts. In the first year of the operation, the steamship was not yet running and carts were sent from the settlement to St. Paul to pick up the goods from England. Later the steamboat service was unreliable and could not be counted on to make the trip in times of low water. As late as 1865, a factor complained that oxen had to be kept on hand to make the trip in its place.

I believe it will be better to leave the Steamer International *out of our calculations in all future schemes of transport; the facilities it may occasionally offer do not compensate for the continual expenses incurred on her account, more especially when it is borne in mind that owing to the uncertainty of her being able to make the trip, we are under the necessity of Keeping a large stock of cattle on hand to be available if required.*[33]

At first the Company took it upon itself to carry the goods and for this reason it purchased oxen and carts and established a post at Georgetown on the Red River south of the border. Some of the oxen were wintered there so the goods could get an early start in the spring. Others were kept at the lower fort, at first to travel between Red River and the south, and later to supply the oxen for other trips into the interior. With the changes in transportation the lower fort became an important depot for the stabling of oxen for the transshipment of goods to the Saskatchewan.

At the same time the shortage of provisions in the Red River in the 1850s led directly to the establishment of the farm at the lower fort in 1857. Gradually Simpson became more and more dissatisfied with the uncertain food supply. With the arrival of the Canadian Rifles in the settlement in 1857, he resolved to do something about the chronic food shortage and high prices. Farms were established at the lower fort and eventually at the White Horse Plain. In addition to feeding the servants of the Company, the farms were also essential at the terminals of cart trails for the feeding of oxen as this animal assumed an increasingly important role in the transportation system of the Company.

The natural qualities of Lower Fort Garry made it the logical choice for the location of a new Company farm. It had always been considered by Simpson to be ideal for such a purpose especially after its original role had been aborted by the construction of the new upper fort. As early as 1838, when the experimental farm on the Assiniboine had been established, Simpson had projected an additional farm at the lower fort. In his instructions to Cary he told him of his plans:

As it is intended the Farming operations shall be on a large scale, I think it will be necessary to have two Establishments, instead of one, i.e., one at the Forks and the other at the stone Fort;. . .For various reasons, I think that [the lower fort] *will in due time become the Principal Farming Establishmt as the pasture is more rich and abundant in that Neighbourhood than anywhere else with dry ridges that may with little labor be cleared of the willows & underwood, so as to become peculiarly well adapted for sheep walks.*[34]

His enthusiasm was again noted in a later letter which praised the "country about the Lower Fort" for its "pastural and agricultural" possibilities.[35] The use of the lower fort in the 1840s and 1850s for the wintering of beef cattle and for the breeding of horses attested Simpson's faith in its potential capabilities for grazing.

Simpson wrote to the Governor and Committee informing them of his intentions to establish the farm in June, 1857. His letter sounded a note of complete frustration after years of depending on the unavailing settlers of the Red River: *Notwithstanding the constant cry of the Red River settlers, of the want of a market for agricultural produce, recent experience has taught us that, we cannot depend upon them for the necessary supply of the Company's trading posts and the garrison. It has, therefore, been decided to commence farming on the Company's account at the Lower Fort under the charge of Mr. A. Lillie, clerk, a very active and promising officer, who has a practical knowledge of farming. The land is now in the course of being broken up. We shall this season indent for some ploughs, harness &c and conduct our operations on a scale calculated to produce about:*

100 barrels Flour)
50 head of Beef Cattle) per annum
100 Hogs)

If this farm be well conducted, I think the above produce may be raised at less cost than it could be purchased for in the settlement.[36]

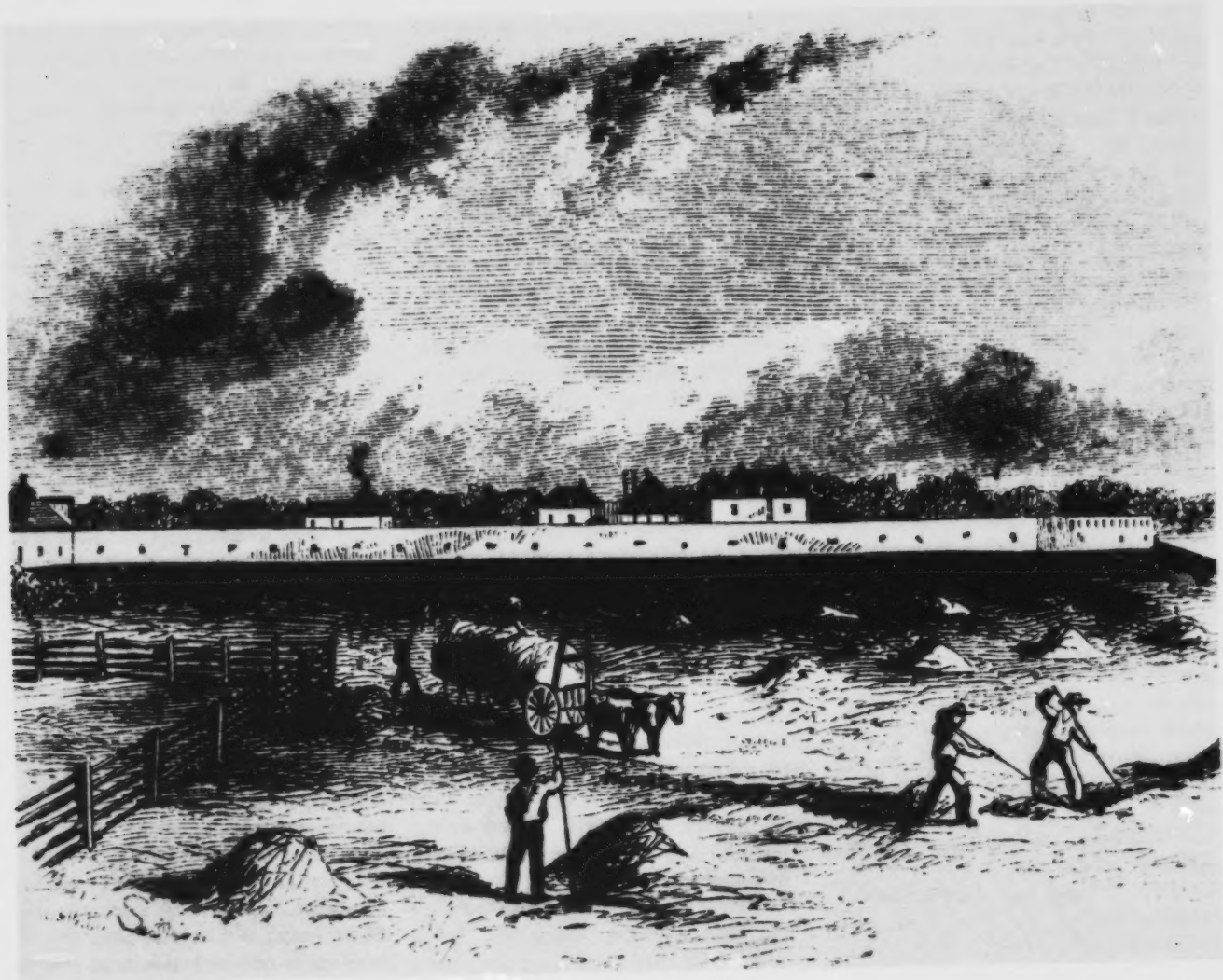
Simpson made it clear that the main purpose was to provide a source of provisions in the face of the failure of the settlers to supply the Company's needs. A possible saving was only an additional consideration.

Simpson lost no time in gathering together the ingredients for a farm; the need was made greater by the arrival of the Canadian Rifles in the settlement. Andrew McDermot was consigned to supply 100 head of cattle in the fall of 1857 – 50 oxen to be slaughtered and "50 cows with their calves, the cows 2 years old & upwards. . .for breeding."[37]

Throughout the summer of 1857, the difficulties of Chief Factor William Mactavish in supplying the Canadian Rifles with food underlined the necessity for a farm. Grasshoppers had destroyed the crops, forcing the settlers to keep the meager returns of their farms for their own subsistence. It would therefore be necessary for the Company to import flour and cattle from the United States.[38] But a more permanent solution was under way: "Sir George Simpson has given me instruction to commence farming operations at Lower Fort Garry and in consequence between 40 and 50 acres have already been ploughed up and as much more will probably be so before winter sets in. I have also bought up all the grain and cattle which I could induce the Settlers to sell but they are evidently unwilling to part with provisions of any Kind."[39] On the same day he wrote in detail to Simpson reporting his progress and requesting additional supplies:

In obedience with your instructions between 40 & 50 acres of land have been ploughed up at the Lower Fort and it is

3 Taking in hay south of the fort, 1859. (*Harper's New Monthly Magazine, August 1860.*)



hoped that as much more will yet be so before winter, every exertion will be used to procure fencing during winter so as to get the whole under crop next season as the farm harvests procurred in the Settlement is not only expensive but very unsatisfactory. . . . I would also beg leave to suggest that six Farm Servants should be engaged in Orkney and sent out next season and if one or two of them were accompanied by their wives they would be useful as a considerable quantity of dairy produce might be made at the Lower Fort Farm during the past summer no produce of this description has been obtained from the Settlers.[40]

In his reply, Simpson urged Mactavish to work ahead on the farm. Although he doubted that he would be able to obtain the farm labourers, his indent for harness, ploughs, and other goods was forwarded to England.[41] In the mail of the following spring, the Governor and Committee gave their approval for the establishing of the farm and reported that they had directed that Mactavish's indent be filled.[42]

In 1857, the lower fort was poised on the brink of its venture into farming. Over the following decade, oxen, beef cattle, and other domestic animals were purchased and bred at the fort and land was placed under cultivation. The solutions to the two problems of the Company — transportation and food supply — were separate and yet combined. The large herd of oxen, kept mainly for the transport service, was often called upon to supply draught animals for the day-to-day work in the fields and for transporting the produce of the farm. In many ways cultivation was undertaken as an adjunct to the keeping of oxen. Certainly haying was an important task at the lower fort, and turnips were grown for feeding the stock. The two aspects, cultivation and the raising of livestock, developed simultaneously; for purposes of analysis, however, the two will be discussed in turn.

Livestock

The livestock operation had two main functions; the supply of meat for the fort and the fur trade, and the maintenance of draught animals for transport and other work in the Company's service.

After the decision had been made to establish a farm, Simpson lost little time in building up a herd of beef cattle. In 1858, he instructed his new agents in St. Paul, the Burbank brothers, to begin gathering oxen for a drive that summer. *We purpose sending a party to St. Paul in the course of the month of July, to drive from thence a herd of cattle for Killing in the fall. We require 100 head of good beef oxen, from 6 to 8 years old: — full sized animals none to be under 6 years. I learn that they may be purchased at moderate rates in your market, a few at a time, by a person who is able to watch the opportunities that offer. I should feel much obliged if you would immediately commence purchasing cattle, such as I have described, for the Hudson's Bay Co. from time to time as they may be offered.*[1]

At the end of June, James McKay and Alexander Lillie were sent down with four men to drive the livestock back from St. Paul. Many of the cattle were to be slaughtered upon their arrival in the settlement; others were to be kept for a later date.

The party will leave Red River about the end of this month, and are expected to be able to leave Saint Paul on their return the first week in August. As the pasturage at that season is very good, it is thought that by driving the cattle slowly across the plains, they may reach the settlement in condition to be slaughtered in the fall. With this addition to the stock already on hand, we shall have abundant means for meeting all demands upon us until the autumn of 1859, at which date many of the young oxen already purchased, may be brought into consumption.[2]

The oxen from St. Paul would supplement the herd bought from McDermot the previous fall.

The purchase of beef cattle for the Company in 1858 — a large one by any standards — seems to have been the last one of the sort for the next decade. Later purchases were partially made unnecessary by the continuation of breeding operations at the farm. At least a few bulls were kept permanently. In 1863, Dr. Bird, a settler, asked for and received "the loan of one of the Bulls at the

Lower Fort this summer on the condition of his Keeping the animal over next winter."[3] Also, in the large herd of oxen kept on hand for the purposes of transport the Company had a steady supply of beef. Simpson explained this advantage to the Company secretary in giving his reasons for using oxen instead of horses for the Company transport:

The advantage of employing oxen in preference to horses consists in the first cost being less, their maintenance less difficult, and the chance of their being stolen by Indians less; and above all, that when no longer required for draught purposes, they may be converted into Beef, the demand for which at Fort Garry at all times exceeds the supply.[4]

In the journal of the late 1860s and in the daily account books of the lower fort, there are frequent references in the fall to the slaughtering of oxen or cattle for the mess and the fur trade. Stocky animals were selected from the herd of draught oxen, slaughtered, and then processed and preserved. On 3 and 4 November 1873, for example, 29 cattle were slaughtered and dressed to 22,243 pounds of beef.[5] The chore would be done by the ordinary servants of the Company.

Milch cows were also kept to supply milk and cheese for the upper and lower forts. The size of the dairy herd was probably not large as one maid, Charlotte Swain, was sufficient to do the milking.[6] There was also a dairy at the lower fort.[7]

Other types of animals were maintained for their meat. Sheep, for instance, seem to have been kept in significant numbers. In 1873, 52 were slaughtered producing 3,462 pounds of mutton, and they were also sheared for their wool.[8] Pigs were also included among the stock being attended by the herdsman. They, too, were kept in significant numbers. In 1871, fire destroyed "one pigstye" killing "forty-four small pigs."[9] The journal implies that there was a much larger stock. Selected pigs were fattened and slaughtered in the late fall or early winter; in November, 1868, for instance, 37 pigs were slaughtered, dressing down to a weight of 4,149 pounds. The pork was salted or pickled and put up in casks, and hams were smoked.[10]

In 1863, there was an unsuccessful venture in keeping hens. The manner in which the incident is discussed seems to indicate that the scheme was a new departure and judging from its lack of success, it was probably not tried again. Mactavish with his usual meticulous eye chided Murray for his poor management: *Last fall you purchased for the Lower Fort about 1 doz. Hens half of them I know you sent up here in spring but from the remainder you have I believe not received a single egg while you have been buying eggs for the use of the Lower Fort Mess. I mention this to point out to you that after going to the expense of feeding the fowls through the winter through carelessness you have had no advantage from the expense.*[11]

The usual procedure was to buy eggs from the settlers and these were preserved in kegs for use in the trade or at the local posts.[12]

The large herd of oxen for the transport service was begun at the same time as Simpson ordered beef cattle from St. Paul. In the fall of 1858, he directed Mactavish to collect oxen and carts for the new southern route:

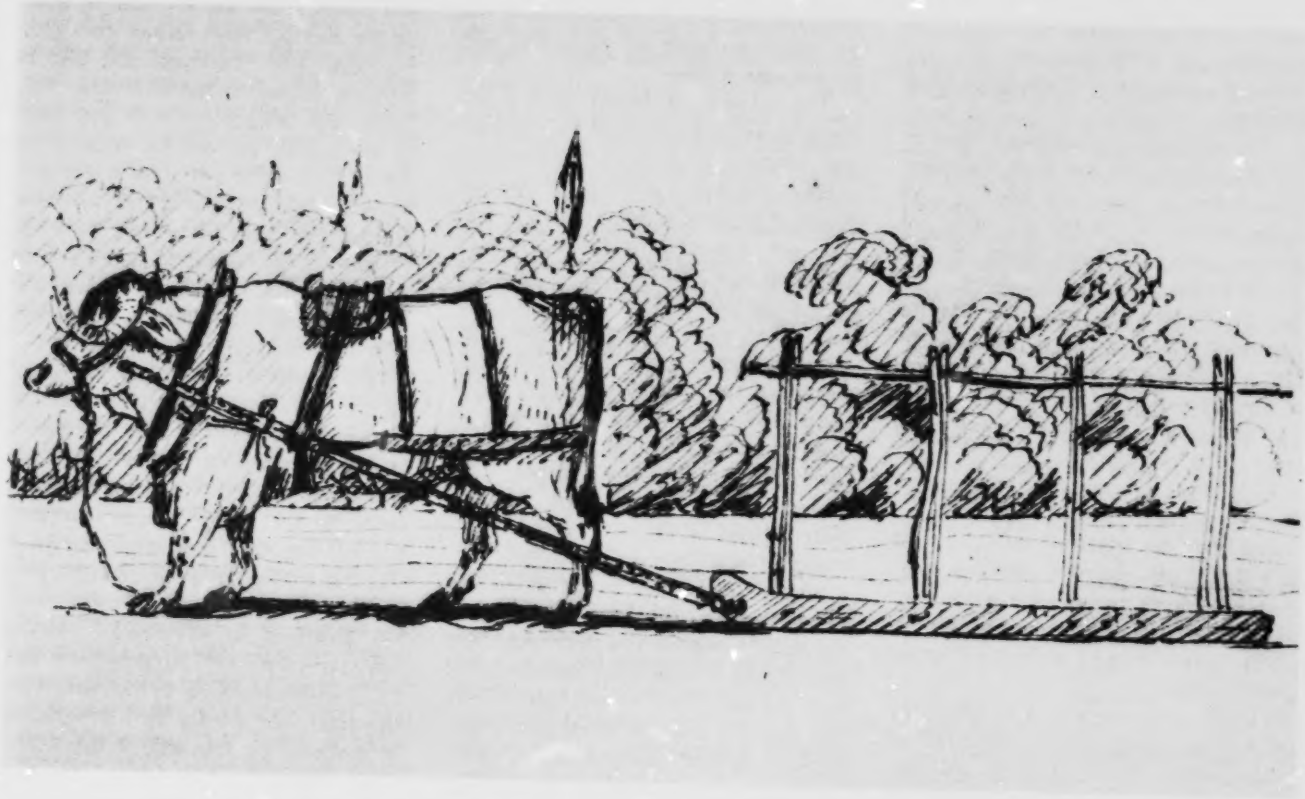
I have, therefore, to request you will endeavor to purchase, between this and the opening of navigation, if possible 100 head of working oxen also 100 carts and harness. At the rate of 5 carts to one driver, we shall require 20 teamsters, the whole to be under the orders of Mr. James McKay, who I think is well suited to the conduct of the transport business.[13]

In 1859, Simpson ordered 65 more draught oxen from J.C. Burbank. These were to be combined with the ox cart train from Red River for the return trip: *Our ox carts will start for St. Paul about the 20 instant. – say 100. They will take with them 50 spare carts for the oxen you are to purchase on the Company's account. Let me beg the favor of your having that purchase completed by the end of this month, and the oxen put out to some good pasture near St. Paul in readiness to start about the 10 July. They should be young animals and accustomed to work, otherwise they will scarcely be fit for our service. . . . P.S. On further consideration, it is thought advisable to have a few spare oxen; I have, therefore, to beg you will purchase 65 instead of 50 as originally ordered.*[14]

Many of these were destined for the new post at Georgetown.[15] Others were stationed at the lower fort.

The herd at the lower fort was a large one. In 1863, when Mactavish requested an inventory of those "fit for a trip to Saskatchewan," there were 100, or at most, counting young animals, 120 oxen available.[16] Adding to these the oxen

4 Ox pulling sled. (*Glenbow Foundation.*)



which were unfit, those already out on brigades and those required for work about the fort, the total would be considerable.

The oxen were occasionally used on the southern supply line when the steamboat failed to make the trip.[17] Their main service was in the supply of the inland posts, especially those of the Saskatchewan district, which was supplied by land from Red River after the change in the transportation system. The cart train set out from Upper Fort Garry where most of the carts were stored (at the White Horse Plain) but the oxen were kept at the lower fort.

The lower fort was also a convalescent centre for oxen which were unfit for travel after the trip from an outpost to the Red River. Animals from the lower fort herd were given to the drovers for the return trip. Such was the case in 1863, when animals arrived exhausted from Carlton:

Your men arrived here on the night of the 29th Ultimo with only 4 oxen, one of their animals having died on the way down and one they left at Portage La Prairie, and as all their cattle are perfectly unfit to return I sent them on the 30th to the Lower Fort for 6 oxen, they returned with them last night & will leave today with 6 R.R. oxen & 30 Bags Pemican but I fear they cannot reach you by the time appointed by Mr. Christie, please take good care of our oxen as they will be required by likely the second Brigade of carts going from here to Carlton in___ yours will remain here for the present & the time of their return to you must depend on circumstancy.[18]

Although the oxen were considered to belong to one post or another, there was an active exchange of borrowing and lending among them.

The division of labour of the two Forts Garry in the work of the fur trade also necessitated a constant intercourse between the two, and when the river was frozen or impassable, oxen and carts were used for transport. In 1859, Roderick Campbell noted that "a cart Trail as old as the pyramids of Egypt ran parallel with the river between these two forts."[19] Staples and provisions would be sent from the lower fort for use at the upper fort and to fill out ladings of brigades leaving from that post. From the upper fort would come goods from England for use at the lower fort and trade articles to fill out the indents of brigades leaving from the lower fort.[20]

In addition to their duties in transportation, the oxen were used in the work of the farm,[21] and for this there must have been a herd of significant size connected with the lower fort in the 1860s. There was also a number of riding and wagon horses – at least six and probably more. In 1864, when Governor Dallas was brought up from the United States, Mactavish asked Davis at the lower fort for "Kirkby, Billy the Butcher, the Canadian Horse, Grey Jack, McKenzie, and Split Log."[22] His selection implies that there were more. By 1871 there was also a mule team at both the upper and lower forts.[23]

Livestock: The Operation

When the herd of oxen was first accumulated it was no doubt kept in cattle byres north of the fort. The oxen were fed turnips[24] and hay, some of which was grown in the area immediately south of the fort but most hauled from great distances. The time-consuming task of bringing fodder to the oxen may have forced the Company to look eventually to its satellite stations for keeping the cattle. Toward the end of the sixties only some of the oxen were at the lower fort, although the cattle byres were still there. Probably those needed for work around the fort, some of the beef stock, and those required immediately for cart trains would be found at the fort itself.

The remainder was distributed to various subordinate stations such as Cook's Creek in the Indian Settlement and Netley Creek near the mouth of the Red River. In 1861, men were building sheds for the cattle at Cook's Creek[25] and by the mid-sixties, there were also sheds at Netley Creek where cattle were wintering.[26] Both of these places were the locations of considerable haying operations each fall, so they were probably selected because of their proximity to winter feed and for their lush pasture in summer. By the end of the 1860s, Netley Creek had become an important station. Robinson described its appearance and operation:

At a distance of some twenty miles, at the foot of Lake Winnipeg, among the marshes and lowlands, are the cattle ranches of the company. There the stock is herded during the summer and housed in winter, being only driven to the uplands during the spring and fall freshets. The generally high price of cattle makes stock-raising extremely profitable, and the wandering life attendant upon their care is particularly suited to the native herdsmen. The stock is collected

every spring and branded, and such a number selected as may be required for work purposes during the summer months. Oxen are used for freighting to a large extent; trains of several hundred, harnessed singly in carts, crossing the prairies, being not an unusual sight. The majority of the large forts in the Southern country have their stockyards and farms, and the amount of wealth accumulated in this way is enormous.[27]

However, Netley Creek remained a substation of Lower Fort Garry. Labour was sent from there and the cattle station was included in the fort's accounts. In 1868, for instance, men went from the lower fort to the creek to repair the cattle sheds in November, remaining for a number of weeks, and every fall, men went to cut and stack the hay. In October, 1871, one man was sent to assist in branding the cattle.[28] Also, all through the fall and winter, men went with carts and sleds to bring back loads of hay to the lower fort for the cattle and other stock which were wintering there. Oak Point on Lake Manitoba was a station similar to Netley Creek. Men were sent there to assist in the haying, and cattle and oxen were shunted back and forth between there and Lower Fort Garry.[29]

Very little information survives describing the care of the Company livestock and in fact very little attention seems to have been paid to their care. An observer in 1859 noted generally of the cattle in the Red River Settlement that "little care seems to be taken of them at any time."[30] The oxen appear to have been stabled around November: toward the end of October each year, the men of the fort would be "hauling mud for fixing up the byres" and generally putting them in repair.[31] They seem to have remained inside as late as May in some years. After their release, only a loose watch was kept while they were out to pasture, especially after those needed for the brigades and for the work on the farm had been selected. It seems that the oxen were taken to good pasturage and allowed to roam until they were required or brought back for winter stabling. The men of the lower fort were given advance notice to collect oxen for brigades, and sometimes warned to keep their oxen together. In the fall for at least a month and sometimes longer, men were sent out to collect strays up and down the settlement.

Cultivation

Cultivation began immediately after the decision had been made to establish the farm at Lower Fort Garry. Alexander R. Lillie, who had entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1854, was appointed to Lower Fort Garry to take charge of the farm bringing with him considerable experience in agriculture. Roderick Campbell described Lillie and the farm in the early years, incidentally ascribing to the farm a significant pioneer contribution to Canadian agriculture in the West.

Mr. Lillie was known to Sir George Simpson, governor of the company, to have had considerable experience in farm management in his native Fifeshire, and he was forthwith charged with the first establishment of an experimental farm there under the Hudson's Bay Company. He superintended the farm for some years with success far beyond the fondest expectation. Indeed, had anyone, however sane, said fifty years ago that the wheat crop of the Red River district would one day be an important factor in the total yield of Canada, he would have been looked upon as a wild visionary, so universal was the ignorance respecting the climatic conditions and the agricultural possibilities of that or any other section of the vast Hudson's Bay territory in the regions beyond Lake Superior.[32]

In the fall of 1857, 40 to 50 acres of land were already ploughed under and it was planned to plough as much again before winter set in.[33] Although ploughs and harness were ordered from England, production must have begun using local equipment as already in the following spring a mixed crop was sown:

Sowed

Bushels	*Wheat*	*66*
"	*Barley*	*17*
"	*Oats*	*6*
"	*Pease*	*4*
"	*Potatoes*	*34*

2 acres under turnips[34]

This was a considerable undertaking for the first year's planting.

After the flurry of spring planting, Lillie went with James McKay to St. Paul to pick up a herd of cattle which the Company had ordered and at the same time brought back "a reaping machine for the Lower Fort Farm."[35] This machine was probably manufactured and purchased in the United States. One year later, when Simpson was establishing a new post at Georgetown, he asked his agent in St. Paul to purchase a reaping machine for the farm there.[36]

The farm was thus prepared for its first harvest in the fall of 1858, a harvest which Mactavish described as "tole-

rable."[37] Lillie reported the crops as follows:

Threached [sic]

Bushels	*Wheat*	*765*
"	*Barley*	*102*
"	*Oats*	*36*
"	*Pease*	*33*
"	*Potatoes*	*560*
Turnips	*3050 bushels*[38]	

Simpson was pleased, but not overly so, with the first year's production:

The crop at the Lower Fort farm of which you have sent a note, is satisfactory for the first season.[39]

After the farm's first year, the size of the crops increased spectacularly, except in the years when farm production throughout the whole of the Red River Settlement was affected by natural phenomena. In 1859, the crop of wheat alone was expected to exceed 2,000 bushels:

The Wheat crop as far as it has been thrashed out is turning out better than was expected — our own Crop at the Lower crop [sic] *judging from what has been thrashed will exceed 2,000 Bushels of Wheat.*[40]

As for the other crops in that year, Roderick Campbell, who arrived at the fort in 1859, described them in glowing terms:

The experiment in agriculture proved most encouraging, and the harvest was everything that could be desired. The golden-tinted wheat, the plump round barley, the capital potatoes and turnips, soon showed the fertile capabilities of the Red River Valley.[41]

Elsewhere he was more imaginative in his description:

When I arrived at Lower Fort Garry in October, 1859, upon going round the place on the first morning, I quite imagined I had peradventure fallen from the sky into a large farmyard in the country of Midlothian, so great were the number of wheat, barley and oat stacks in the farmyard in the wilderness.[42]

In spite of the size of the crop returns, Mactavish was still skeptical of the results because of the costs. If it had not been for the independence of the settlers which the farm gave, he seemed prepared to abandon the venture.

The crop of the Lower Fort Farm has this season been very large, but the Establishment is so very expensive that beyond the advantage of having the grain of our own & thereby to some extent making us independent of the Settlers, I do not think there is any profit.[43]

A bumper crop in 1860 erased even Mactavish's scepticism:

I expect that the yield of the Company's Farms here will be over 4,000 Bushels of Wheat which will if realized go far to render us independent of the Settlers.[44]

But in the following year (1861) a general failure destroyed the crops of the Red River, not excluding the lower fort farm.

I regret to say that the Crops in the Settlement this season are very inferior, the Wheat of this season will it is thought be unequal to a year's consumption and the Barley & potatoe Crops are perfect failures; the yield of the Company's farms has been better than most of the Farmers have had but the Wheat sown has only given from 7 to 8 [bus.?] *returns, the Barley crop has been a fair one but the potatoes failed entirely, however I am happy to say that we have a fully sufficient stock for the wants of the Trade.*[45]

In 1861, Lillie left Lower Fort Garry and farming to pursue the fur trade once again. In the winter of that year, he was sent north to stave off some illicit traders, and by 1863 he was in charge of Carlton.[46] For a time after his departure the farm was left in the hands of the ordinary servants of the Company. George Davis, listed as being an interpreter in 1855 and later placed in charge of the post,[47] supervised the farm along with his other duties. William Mactavish, in charge of the district and accommodated at the upper fort, kept a watchful eye on the affairs of the lower fort.

The farm did not fare well under these arrangements: an observer in 1867 reported that it had declined somewhat after Lillie's departure:

A few years before the large farm attached to the establishment had been under a very able agriculturist from Scotland, Mr. A. R. Lillie, but he had forsaken the plough to follow the fur trade and become a chief trader. The farm was still carried on in a way to provide employment to a number of temporary servants, but the intensive methods of Mr. Lillie had been largely abandoned.[48]

By 1868, the farm was once again in the hands of a specialist, Mr. Geddes,[49] who may have been there earlier. He terminated his charge and left the service 1 June 1870.[50] With the departure of Geddes, the cultivation of wheat seems to have ended. During the 1860s, the crops had remained much the same as those of 1858; that is, wheat, barley, oats, peas,

potatoes, turnips and hay. After 1870, mention is made only of a garden, then under James Voller, and the growing of potatoes, peas, and other garden crops.[51]

There is no documented reason for the change, but it appears that the Company no longer felt that it was economical to carry on farming at Lower Fort Garry. After the lean years of the late 1860s when crops failed repeatedly throughout the settlement, farming in the Red River took a leap forward and finally came into its own. By this time production was such that the settlement could easily satisfy the needs of the Company, and if this failed, the Company had farms elsewhere. Also, improvements in transportation made outside supplies more accessible. This removed the reason for the farm's existence as it had been established not so much to accrue profit as to provide an independent and secure source of supply.

The Agricultural Operation

Area Under Cultivation

In the first year of the farm, 1857, 40 to 50 acres were already under the plough by the early fall and it was planned to have as much again broken under by the arrival of winter.[52] This would give a total of at least 100 acres for the initial planting in the following spring (1858). Most of this was located across the road west of the fort. At the same time land immediately south of the fort was used as meadowland where hay was cut in the fall.

By 1860, the year of the bumper crop, considerably more land must have been under cultivation. The yield in wheat was expected to be over 4,000 bushels and allowing a generous return per acre of 40 bushels,[53] this would indicate that a minimum of 100 acres was devoted to wheat alone. Above this were the lands planted in oats, barley, peas, turnips, potatoes, and so on.

A plan of the fort in the early 1870s, when the main operations of the farm had been discontinued, indicates three farming areas: a long strip across the road from the fort (it is marked "park" in the plan and apparently was used for growing wheat); a square of land immediately across the road from the fort, and a small area on the other side of the creek south of the fort. The acreage of all three areas would hardly exceed 100 acres. Even this may be excessive for the amount of farming activity at that time.

The Farming Routine

(The more active years have been used for illustration, especially 1868-69, when the activity was recorded in the Lower Fort Garry journal. Information from other periods has been included, however.)

The spring planting began each year toward the end of April,[54] both the garden and the large farming operations commencing at the same time. The following excerpts from the journal of 1869 explain the routine:

21 April	*commenced garden*
26 April	*began farming this morning*
2 May	*the ground is drying up considerably and I hope that we will be able to go on with the farming tomorrow*
3 May	*Mr. Geddes with fifteen boys & men out in the field ploughing, sowing & harrowing*
12 May	*Mr. Geddes with a man and some boys planted some potatoes*
13 May	*planted more potatoes*
15 May	*3 men cutting seed potatoes*
18 May	*last of wheat sown today – 250 bushels*
19 May	*eight men & boys working in the field planting potatoes and sowing barley*
24 May	*Mr. Geddes & his man finished the farming today*
11 June	*four men sowing turnips*[55]

For seed, the farm used its own stock if possible. In 1864, for example, Mactavish sent lengthy instructions as to the planting:

I was glad to hear your farming was progressing so satisfactorily the quantity of wheat to be sown seems small/take care it is not being sown too thin – you can take the pease at the Lower Fort for seed . . . . I have here a few bushels black oats which I might perhaps give rather than want seed. Mr. Lane wants 10 Bushels Barley for seed & 30 Bushels lime for plastering his house – perhaps you will be able to send them both up when you send for potatoes . . . . I send down . . . a few garden seeds/be particular in marking them as I am desirous to see how each kind thrives/note particularly a new kind pea sent called "Sugar Pea"/was all the seed I left below last year sown[?] Unfortunately I have had no carrot seed sent me.[56]

After a poor year, seed wheat was sometimes imported.[57]

Immediately after the seeds were in the ground the fields were fenced – an annual chore. The fences were probably taken down in the spring and fall to allow farm vehicles and machinery to pass

unimpeded through the fields. In early April, 1869, four men were preparing pickets for the field fence[58] and in June after the seed was in the ground, five men were "working at the fencing,"[59] probably erecting the fence. In the fall, there is reference to boys hauling fencing.[60] With the cattle allowed to run freely, fences were necessary to protect the crops.

More ground was broken in the summer months. In June and early July there are frequent references to men "ploughing fallow ground."[61] In this case the farm may have been employing some form of crop rotation; however, at other times, new land was placed under the plough.[62]

Most important of all the summer activities was the caring for the planted fields. There is frequent reference to "women grubbing and weeding" or to "Mr. Geddes and some women weeding wheat."[63]

Sometime in August, depending upon the type of season, the harvest began. Early in the month, the haying operations were already under way and the cutting of the wheat soon followed. In 1863, Mactavish was worried that the wheat harvest had not begun before 6 August.[64]

The following selections from the Lower Fort Garry journal of 1869 illustrate the hustle of the fall:

August — *men haying especially at Netley Creek*

17 August — *Mr. Geddes out conducting the reaping of barley done by sickle because of heavy rain*

19 August — *Mr. Geddes, two men and fifteen women out reaping and binding barley*

19 August (1870) — *two men cutting pease with scythes*

27 August — *two men behind Long Lake cutting hay with the mower*

28 August — *commenc'd reaping wheat . . . Mr. Geddes out in the field binding and cutting tracks in the wheat for the reaper*

2 October — *finished reaping wheat today*

4 October — *thirteen carts hauling in wheat/three men building grain stacks in the yard*

5 October — *Mr. Geddes and his party continued out in the field reaping and binding oats*

7 October — *some women cutting the pease*

8 October — *finished cutting the crop today, pease, barley, and wheat*

13 October — *one man fixing up cellar for potatoes*

14 October — *had some women with two men pulling turnips and putting them in the store*

15 October — *all the others with some Swampy women taking up potatoes (took 335 bus. potatoes today)*

16 October — *gathered 103 kegs potatoes today (438)*

22 October — *the last of the crop taken in today*

5 November — *began threshing*

After the harvest, the crops were either handled immediately or piled in stacks in the corn yard or hay yard for threshing at a later date. The turnips and potatoes were stored in the root house. Rhubarb from the garden was turned into preserves for the long winter ahead. Often the crops would not be completely processed in the fall and would be held over to the winter or spring. In April, 1870, for example, four men were threshing peas with flails.[65] The wheat required the most attention as the largest and most important crop. After the wheat was threshed, it was kept in various buildings about the fort including the barn, the distillery, and other storehouses. Over the fall and winter it was taken out in small lots to be ground. In the early years of the farm, the wheat was hauled by cart or boat to the private mills in the settlement, especially Tait's mill a few miles up-river and McDermot's mill past Upper Fort Garry at the junction of the Assiniboine and Sturgeon Creek. The flour was brought back to the lower fort or taken to the upper fort to be used in the service of the trade. Later in 1865, when Lower Fort Garry obtained its own steam mill, the grinding was done there over the winter months.

In addition to handling the crops, other duties such as putting up the farm machinery for winter were taken care of after the harvest.[66]

Gradually over the long winter, some of the provisions were consumed at both the lower and upper forts. Much of the flour and other staples were sent out on the brigades in the following spring and summer.

Equipment

During the decade of operation, a quantity of equipment was accumulated for the farm. In the first year of production a reaping machine was brought up from St. Paul and harness, ploughs and other implements were ordered from England.[67]

Many of the implements were made at Lower Fort Garry by the blacksmith, including sickles and other small tools, as well as larger pieces of equipment. Both in 1869 and 1871, men were making a "horse rake" and a "hay rake for horse power."[68] He also repaired the implements; for example, on 15 July 1869, the blacksmith was fitting out the mower and on 2 October 1869, one man was repairing the threshing mill.[69]

At times equipment was brought in from outside; for instance, in 1870, a "two horse power threshing mill" belonging to a William Johnston was used at the fort.[70] After the steam mill was brought into operation, it was sometimes used for threshing.

In spite of the wide range of equipment on the farm, much of the work was still done by hand, including the flailing of peas, cutting of crops, digging of potatoes, and so on.

Work Force

Most of the labour used on the farm was casual, hired by the day to undertake specific tasks. A very large number was women, probably the majority of these Indians brought up from the Indian settlement just down the river from the fort. In August, 1865, for example, thirty-six people, mostly women, were paid for two to four days for reaping barley and oats, and in October, 1870, some "Swampy women" were taking up potatoes.[71] References such as these abound in the journal and the accounts. Many of the men used in the ploughing, planting and harvesting as well as for other heavy work about the fort were also hired as temporary servants. Boys were hired for light tasks.

It is difficult to determine which of the men engaged about the fort were permanent. It seems that the cattlemen, or at least one of them, would be permanent as well as the herdsmen. Perhaps one or two of Mr. Geddes' hands would be permanent as well. All of the supervisory staff would most certainly be. Mr. Lillie was made a clerk in 1858, the year after he took charge of the farm. Mr. Davis was in charge of the fort, in addition to having the responsibility for the farm. Mr. Geddes was permanent although his specific position is not known. James Voller, the gardener, seems to have been a long-time fixture.

The extensive use of day labour for working the farm drove its costs to a level much higher than usual for operating a farm of its size. It is no wonder that Mactavish could complain of the "very considerable cost" of keeping up the farms at the White Horse Plain and the lower fort.[72] But the farms were then necessary for "checking the exhorbitant prices" in the settlement.[73] The high cost of the farm labour probably led the Company to drop the farm as soon as a secure supply of agricultural produce became available from the settlement.

Located near the mouth of the Red River and below the St. Andrews Rapids, the lower fort was in an ideal location to serve as a depot for shipping across Lake Winnipeg. Boat building was introduced in conjunction with the post's role in the transportation system. York boats stationed there required seasonal repair and frequent replacement. After 1865, when the steam mill was built, it became a logical place to construct the schooner *Polly* and later the steamboat *Chief Commissioner.*

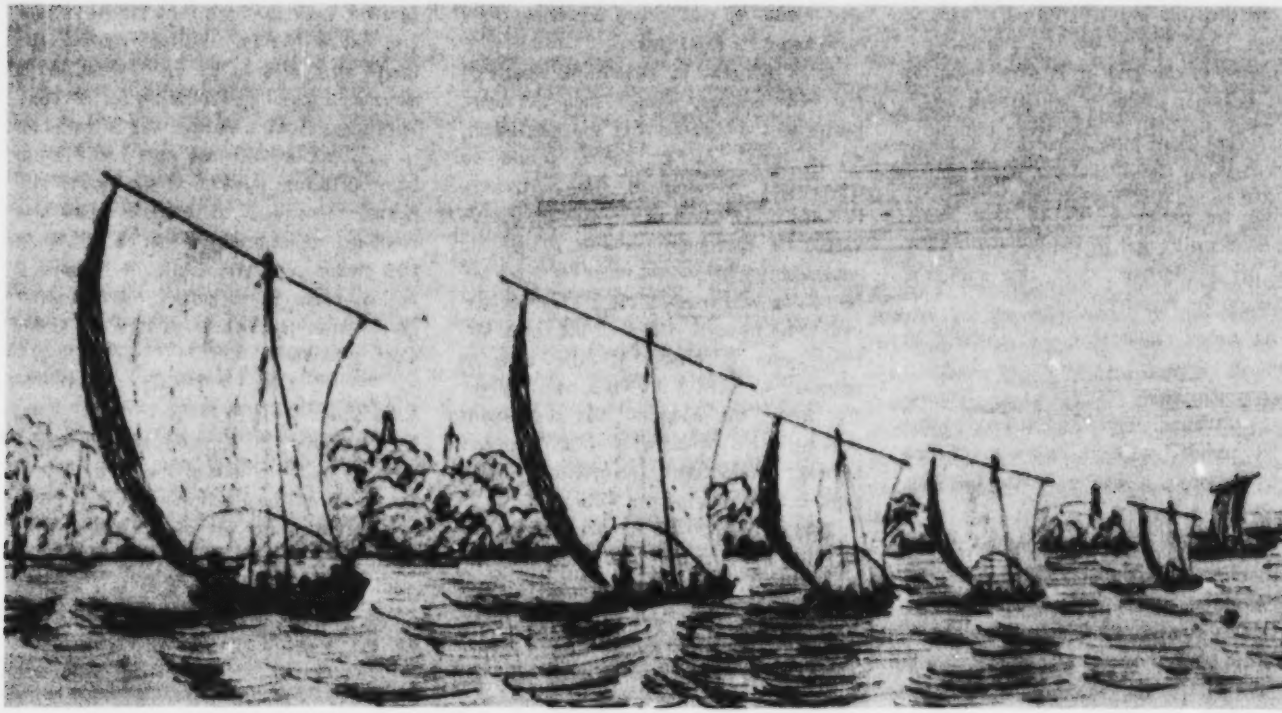
York Boats

By the turn of the century, the York boat was the main vehicle of the inland transportation of the Hudson's Bay Company and remained so for most of the 19th century.[1] They were constructed at a number of posts, although one source notes that the building was "usually done at the head post of each district."[2] Repairs would be carried out wherever boats were stationed.

Norway House, where a new vessel was constructed in 1841, appears to have been an early centre for boat building.[3] However, in 1842, the Northern Council suggested that the next vessel be constructed in the Red River Settlement, and during the 1840s there was some boat building activity there, probably at the upper fort, although Simpson still preferred Norway house.[4] By the 1860s, when specific mention was made to the construction and repair of York boats at the lower fort, boat building had become an established practice at both of the Company forts in the settlement.

York boats were built at both the upper and lower forts as they were

5 York boats sailing on Lake Winnipeg.
(*Glenbow Foundation.*)



needed; and annually in preparation for the navigation season, the existing boats were extensively repaired. Lower Fort Garry was well equipped for boat construction. Its blacksmith could supply the required fittings and supplied the upper fort as well: in 1864, for example, William Mactavish at the upper fort wrote to George Davis, the clerk in charge of the lower fort, asking that "ironwork" be sent up "for the boats to be built here."[5] And from the shop came a steady supply of tin, tacks, pitch and oakum for the construction and repair of the boats.[6] Independent craftsmen, probably settlers around the lower fort, were quite often hired to do the work.[7] At the fort were men adept at making sails, especially "Old Cox," who also made the sails for the schooner. By the 1860s there was a boat shed where the York boats were built.[8]

The actual procedures followed in the construction of a York boat changed very little over time. An article in 1923 explained the building operation at a later period. The approach at Lower Fort Garry was much the same.

Operations for building York boats began usually in July or August by hiring ten, twenty or more suitable men handy with the axe to get out "boat wood." The boat builder or his assistant went as boss of the gang, and they were supplied with a York boat, together with all necessary coverings to protect them from the rain. They carried enough provisions for two weeks or more, dependent on how much "boat wood" was to be secured. Wood used in the planking of the boats was required to be clean of knots and straight in grain to stand steaming and bending to the shape of the model. Ordinary spruce was used for the planking, keel and ribbing, though sometimes tamarac was used for the keel and ribs.

When the gang arrived, in a day or perhaps two days from the post, at a point where there was good timber, they would begin getting out logs marked by the boat builder as suitable and cut them in lengths of 15 or 20 feet. A number were cut 30 to 40 feet, according to the number of keels to be laid. All these logs were pulled out to the shore by man power with ropes and portage straps. While the men were getting the logs out, the boat builder was looking underground for roots bent at the right angle to make the timbers, and these were then cut out.

A raft was then made of the logs and the roots loaded on top. Some roots were put into the York boat and the return trip begun, sails and poles being used to propel the craft. On arrival at the post the raft was broken up and the logs and roots hauled up to the sawpit, where they were all sawn up by a whipsaw, with a man on the top of the stage on which the log was placed and one man below; hence the expression of "the top sawyer." A day's cut for two men would be from 15 to 25 boards. The logs were sawn in the round, in order to give the boat builder as much room as possible for cutting the planking, as the planks were of different shapes.

The day on which the keel was taken into the boat shed to be hewn, shaped and planed, an important entry was made in the daily journal. When the keel was placed on the stocks and levelled properly, the ceremony was gone through of holding a watch against the butt at one end and listening for the tick at the other end. If the tick sounded distinctly, *the keel was a perfect piece of wood, while if not there was an imperfection somewhere, perhaps red-wood in the heart, and at times the keel was rejected. After the keel came the stem and stern crooks, which were spliced on and bolted to the keel with bolts and nuts made by the blacksmith. Then came the "dead wood," usually tamarac, being a square piece bolted to the stern and stern crooks on the inside of the boat. These were what the ends of the planks were nailed to, both the bow and stern. This "dead wood" was shaped by an adze as the planking proceeded, and was cut as each plank was added.*

The next operation was putting on the false timbers on which the planks were bent to the shape of the model. After the planks were cut into shape, they were steamed in a steam-box, which was a long box with a furnace under a large kettle having a pipe running into the steam-box. From five to ten minutes in this steam would be sufficient to make the boards quite pliable and easy to fit into shape on the timbers. After planking was completed, excepting the two top strakes, which were clinkers, the real timbers were put in. These timbers were sawn out of the roots by the pitsaw method, usually two inches thick. The moulds or patterns were placed on them and the shape traced, after which they were cut out by a frame saw on the same principal as fret-work is done.

The nails used in nailing the planks on the timbers were clinched inside, while the clinkers were rivetted with copper rivets made out of the copper hoops which were on the 66-lb. powder kegs

used in importing gunpowder. Gunwales for the oar pins were put in. The iron stern and stern plates were put on the stern and stern posts of the boat. Thwarts were then put in, one in the centre, and one about six feet from the bow, and another six feet from the stern. The stern sheets or accommodation for passengers was then put between the back thwart and the stern.

The boat was then completed, and the entry was made in the daily journal. From twenty to thirty days was the general time, depending on the ability of the boat builder and his assistant. The boat was then run out of the boat shed, caulked with oakum and boiled pitch and tar mixed and rubbed on. After this was rubbed all over the outside, it was burnt over with birch bark torches and rubbed smooth with a canvas mop. The boat was then completed and put into the water, filled and allowed to soak for two or three days. After this treatment the boat was usually tight enough to carry cargo.

A close account was always kept of the actual cost of construction, and the posts supplied with new boats were charged accordingly.[9]

The following entries in the journal for 1869 explain the procedure at the lower fort. This was a particularly active year; none of the other years covered by the journal (1868-74) refer to York boat construction.

19 Feb. 1869	*men using pit saw to cut roots for sawing boat timbers/four men piling boards and cleaning out the boat shed*
20 Feb.	*three men repairing tools etc. for boat building*
26 Feb.	*two men piling and putting up boat wood in the houses to dry*
1 Mar.	*sent up twelve sleds with boat wood etc. for G. U.* [i.e., boat building also going on at the upper fort]
3 Mar.	*four men began a boat*
17 Mar.	*first boat put out of the shed this afternoon*
27 Mar.	*one man peeling boat masts*
2 April	*put out the 2nd boat this evening*
3 April	*commenced the third boat one man cleaning out the old boats*
16 April	*3rd. boat put out of the shed*
17 April	*4th boat began*
21 April	*began repairing the old boats*
7 May	*three men spinning oakum threads for boat builders, three men caulking the new boat*
11 May	*4th boat put out after dinner ready for YF*
24 May	*two working at the boat sails*
25 May	*seven men making masts, rowing pins etc. for boats*
28 May	*boat repairers finished the boats and put the last of the twenty on the river*

The journal also illustrates the extensive preparations for the navigation season in the late winter and spring. The reference to the "last of the twenty" boats being put into the water indicates that there was a considerable number stationed at the lower fort. Each fall they were hauled up "from the river to the top of the bank"[10] for repair and to remove them from the ravages of ice. The chore was a strenuous one: in 1871, it took "all the men with four oxen to haul up the boats."[11]

York boats were used almost daily at the lower fort. There was a constant intercourse with the upper fort and other parts of the settlement. Wheat was hauled to the mills and hay to the fort. Even after the steamboats were introduced on the river, they were dragged behind their future replacement. The brigade to York Factory was an annual event and most of the boats seem to have come from the lower fort. With the switch to the southern supply line, however, the use of York boats decreased and gradually as the lower fort itself declined in importance, the York boat was phased out. There was probably little or no boat construction at the fort after 1880.

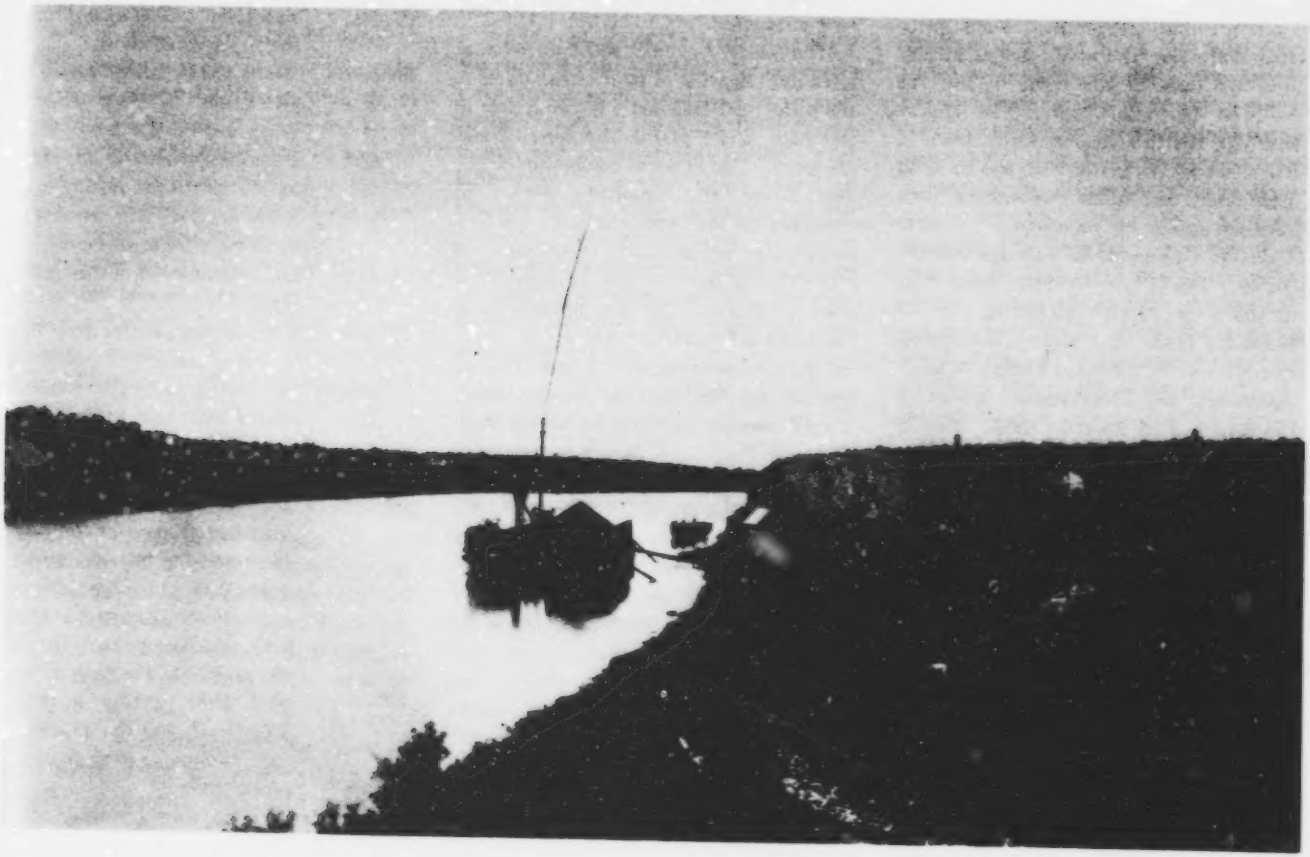
The Schooner Polly

The schooner *Polly*, which for a number of years made frequent journeys each season between Lower Fort Garry and Norway House, was built at the lower fort in 1865-66 under the direction of John M. Brown.[12] After its construction, the schooner was kept in repair and occasionally refitted at the lower fort. In 1868, for example, John Cox was making a new sail and in 1869, two men were "caulking the schooner."[13] The *Polly* sometimes wintered at the lower fort, but more frequently with the other boats at Cook's Creek in the Indian settlement.

The Steamboats

The switch to the Minnesota route enhanced the position of the lower fort: with the indent now brought up from the south, the lower fort became the distri-

By 1879, when Robert Bell photographed the ***Colvile*** tied to the old ***Chief Commissioner,*** then a floating warehouse, the buildings of the industrial area had become quite dilapidated. The roofs of the distillery and the steam mill show above the bank. The small building at the junction of the creek with the Red River is possibly the York boat building shed. To the right is the engineer's cottage, and in the distance, between the cottage and the mill, stands the miller's house. (***Public Archives of Canada.***)



bution point for goods moving out across Lake Winnipeg. Steamboats were introduced into the Company's service shortly after the decision was made in 1857 to use the St. Paul route. The *Anson Northup,* the first steamer down the Red River, made her maiden voyage in 1859 after which she made intermittent trips until she sank at her moorings in the early 1860s. When rebuilt, she was renamed the *Pioneer.* The *Anson Northup* made trips to the lower fort in the spring and fall when the water level allowed navigation through the St. Andrews Rapids. A larger steamboat, the *International,* began to run on the Red River in 1862. After its purchase in 1864-65 by the Hudson's Bay Company, the *International* had frequent contact with Lower Fort Garry. It wintered at Cook's Creek, as had the *Pioneer,* and craftsmen were sent from the fort to repair the vessel, especially to prepare it for navigation in the spring.[14] Ironwork, wood and special parts were provided by the facilities at the lower fort. More extensive repairs were carried out at the fort itself. In September, 1869, for instance, Captain Aymond and the crew of the *International* laid down skids and improvised a crab to pull the steamboat out for a refit.[15] The boat spent the winter at the lower fort undergoing repairs.

When operating, the steamer came to the lower fort whenever possible. In 1869, for instance, it stopped there on its way down from its wintering place at Cook's Creek.

26 April: the steamboat came up and got nearly all hands to work to get her lading on board so that the delay should be as little as possible as the river seems to be falling rapidly.[16]

The *Anson Northup* and *International* were only the first of many steamboats as the lower fort assumed a growing part in this new aspect of the Company's transportation system. From navigation on the Red River, the Company turned to attempts to link the Red with the Saskatchewan across Lake Winnipeg. In 1871-72, as part of the programme, a steamer planned for the Saskatchewan was built at Lower Fort Garry.

In the implementation of the plan to connect the Red with the Saskatchewan, a screw steamer with one funnel was built at Lower Fort Garry during the winter of 1871-72. On 7 June 1872 she was launched, Miss Mary Flett breaking the traditional bottle of wine over her bow and christening her the Chief Commissioner. *The name was no doubt in honor of Donald A. Smith. Sometime during the navigation season the new steamer tried to reach Lake Manitoba from Lake Winnipeg, but was unable to get through by the Dauphin River (then called the little Saskatchewan), and so was doomed to sail the rough waters of Lake Winnipeg for which her shallow draught was unsuited.*[17]

The construction of the steamboat was a one-shot effort using makeshift methods. The work was done outside, probably near the creek south of the fort. The progress of the boat building through the winter and spring of 1871-72 was carefully noted in the journal:

6 Dec. 1871 — *two loads of oak timber brought down today from the town for the steamboat intended to be built*

27 Dec. — *steamboat builders continued making preparations*

22 Jan. 1872 — *steamboat builders obliged to give over working outside when weather got too cold*

20 Apr. — *ships carpenters did not work at the boat outside/had their men hauling and removing timber for the steamboat*

1 May — *all the carpenters at the steamboat*

3 May — *the boat carpenters busy fixing ways to launch the steamer*

6 May — *all our other men hauling round saw logs to build up ways for launching the steamboat*

7 May — *steamer* Chief Commissioner *launched today at 9 A.M. (this morning the new steamboat* Chief Commissioner *was successfully launched/a little beer and rum being given on the occasion/ the most of our men after getting a little, sought out and found wherewith to indulge their drunken propensities)*[18]

Work was by no means finished after the steamer was launched, as she still had to be fitted out. Shipbuilders and blacksmiths continued their work on board:

24 June — *flat boat came down this morning with the boiler and some of the machinery for the Saskatchewan boat*

9 July — *steam first tried on the steamer* Chief Commissioner *this afternoon/the engineer fired up and tested the joints and*

put the screws in motion
0 July [trial run not too sucessful]
6 July C.C. left for Lake Winnipeg[19]

The steamer returned two days later with boiler problems. The old boiler from the *Pioneer* was brought from the White Horse Plain and installed, this one proving to be more adequate. On August 19, the *Chief Commissioner* made a fresh start for the little Saskatchewan:

19 August: the steamer Chief Commissioner *left here this afternoon at half past five for the little Saskatchewan Captain Hewett in command, Mr. Bell engineer, John Mowat pilot, Mr.___Finlayson clerk for the time.*[20]

At the end of August, however, the boat crew returned, reporting that the water was too low in the Saskatchewan for the "steamer to go up at present."[21] On September 29, it came down to pick up supplies for another steamboat which was to be constructed at the Grand Rapid for use on the Saskatchewan.[22] Boat builders from Lower Fort Garry were used to build it.

The *Chief Commissioner* continued to run across Lake Winnipeg until it was finally dismantled in 1875 and its machinery transferred to its successor, the *Colvile*. The *Chief Commissioner* was relegated to service as a floating wharf first at the lower fort and then at Colvile Landing.

Steamers became more numerous on the Red River in the 1870s and Lower Fort Garry continued to be a stopping place and repair point on their schedules. In 1877, for instance, the *Swallow* was entering at the lower fort and the *Colvile*, the *Lady Ellen*, and the *Jessie McKenney* were at Cook's Creek, a satellite post of the fort.[23]

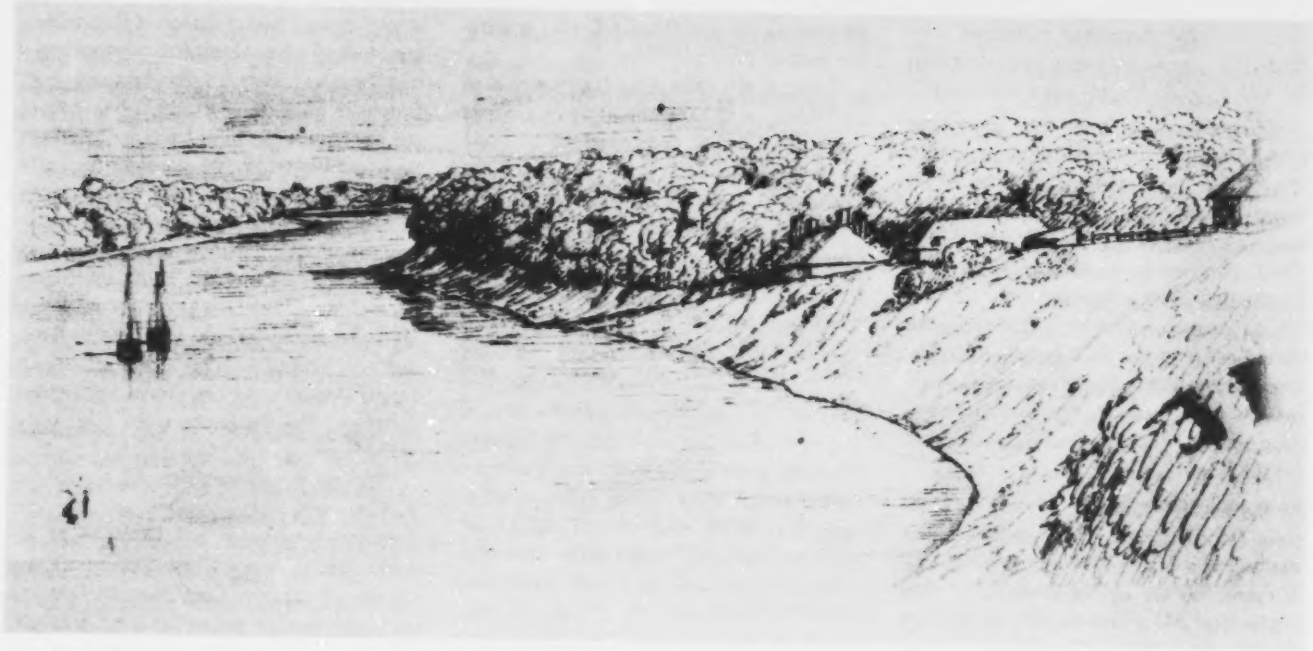
As long as Lower Fort Garry served as the depot for the steamboat service across Lake Winnipeg it continued to be used for the repair of the boats. In 1879, the *Colvile* and *Manitoba* were pulled out for repairs and often the boats would be brought there for the services which the fort could provide. However, when the depot was transferred to Colvile Landing in 1880, the repair facilities were no longer used and the machinery was eventually sold off.

After almost two decades of hesitation, the Hudson's Bay Company constructed a distillery and malt house at Lower Fort Garry in 1845-46. By 1847, the men of the fort were brewing beer and seem to have continued to do so intermittently until 1870, when the brewery went into production on a grand scale. The distillery, however, seems never to have operated. The Company, conscious of its image, was quite restrictive in its policy toward trading spirits with the Indians, and was reluctant to offend the public in North America or in Great Britain by distilling. The buildings were used only for storage.

The costly importation of spirits for trading and for consumption by the Company's servants led Simpson at an early date to consider establishing a local source of supply. Such was in keeping with the general policy of the Company to obtain as much as possible of its requirements in North America. When Simpson suggested a distillery in 1831, Norway House was designated as the potential site. After a meeting of the Northern Council in 1831, he wrote to the Governor and Committee outlining his idea and requesting permission to move ahead with the project:

It has occurred to me that some advantage would arise to the Colony, and a saving to the Fur Trade, by distilling our own spirits at Norway House instead of importing rum from England, as it would afford a market to the Settlers for Barley to the extent of about 4,000 Bushels annually, the average quantity of rum imported to the Northern Department during the last 10 years being about 4,000 Gallons.[1]

7 The industrial buildings south of the fort as sketched by George Finlay in 1847. The rooftops of the distillery-brewery appear near the mouth of the creek. At the extreme right is the cottage. *(Glenbow Foundation.)*



Simpson's first proposal came to nothing when it was vetoed by the Governor and Committee. Undaunted by their refusal, Simpson seems to have continued to nurture the idea, and five years later proposed a distillery again, this time selecting the Red River Settlement as the site. This was certainly a more logical location as it was the source of raw material for the production of whiskey. The Governor and Committee reversed their previous stand, and somewhat cautiously advanced their approval for Simpson's proposal:

We notice your suggestion and recommendation that a Distillery should be established at the settlement which for the reasons given we think may now be expedient: we therefore no longer withhold our assent, if on further consideration you and the Council of Assiniboia consider such necessary or proper, and if after reconsidering the subject in all its bearings, you still view it in the same light, you may proceed in erecting the necessary buildings and putting the Distillery in operation under the management of the Company's Principal representative at Red River, purchasing the grain at a fair price and selling the spirits (not to exceed proof strength) to the settlers and to the Fur Trade at a price to cover the expenses of distilling, and an excise duty of two shillings and six pence a Gall: the proceeds of this duty to be at the disposal of the Governor and Council of Assiniboia and made applicable in like manner as the duties on imports and exports to defray the expenses, connected with the maintenance of the Police Corps, Jail, Court House, and other public works or institutions, that may be considered necessary for the good government of the settlement.[2]

Their search for total approval in the settlement indicated that they would withdraw from a disagreeable task at the least sign of opposition.

For the moment, however, they moved ahead quickly with the project, ordering "a still with requisite appurtenances" to be sent out on one of the ships of that season.[3] John Codling, a distiller, who seems to have been in the settlement at the time, was expected to "conduct the works."[4]

Meanwhile, Simpson and Alexander Christie, the senior officer of the Company in the settlement, were searching for the best location for a distillery. Only the upper and lower forts were considered. Of these Simpson favoured the latter because of its isolation; at the upper fort there was danger of flooding. The shortage of fresh water at the lower fort was a problem, however.

In regard to the Distillery, I think it should be established at the Lower Fort if water can be obtained by sinking a well or in any other way, and in the course of the winter before proceeding with the buildings, I would recommend your ascertaining that fact by boring down to the level of the river where I think there can be no doubt that water would be found. In the event of no water being found there, I am quite at a loss where to recommend the Distillery being placed, – it must of course be either at the Lower or Upper Fort, the Lower would be preferable as being less exposed to the view and visits of settlers and Indians. On this subject I shall be glad to have your opinion by the earliest opportunity.[5]

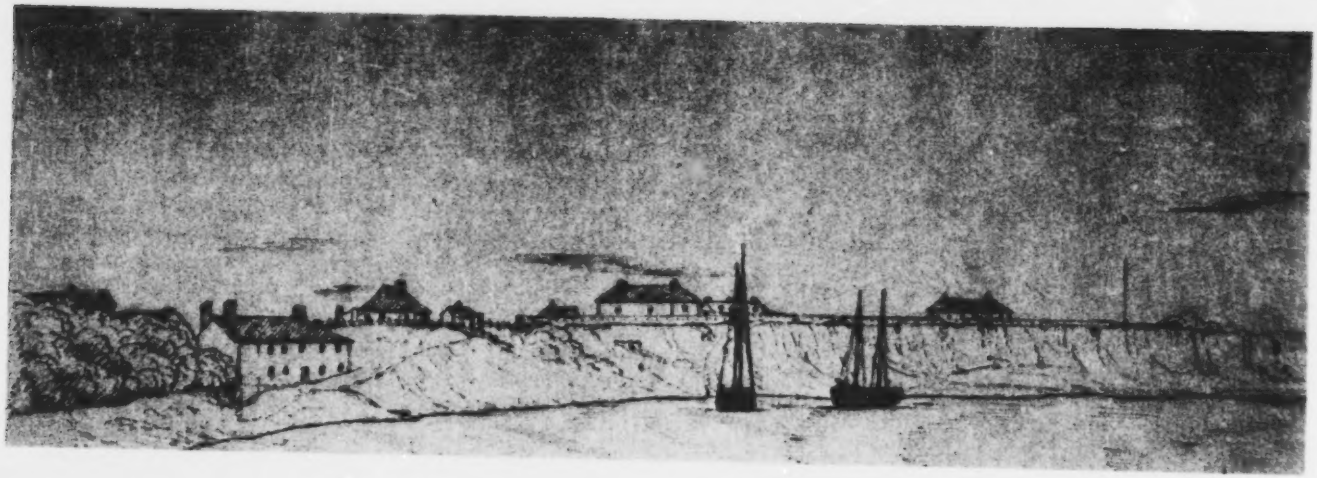
After a reconsideration of the water problem, Simpson ten days later changed his mind and recommended that the upper fort be selected. The problem of flooding would be overcome by locating the distillery out of the path of a possible flood.

As there is a difficulty about obtaining waters at the Lower Fort I think it will be necessary to erect the Distillery at the Forks; but on the second Bank of the Assiniboine fronting the new Fort it will be exposed to spring high water and in all probability be swept away by the current which is very strong when the River is high. On the flat to the right of the Fort immediately under the Guns of the Round Corner Bastion it would be out of the strength of the current even should the river be so high as to inundate it, and there by digging a few feet I think you will find water.[6]

At the same time, he told Christie that the "malt roller and other things" apparently ordered by him, would be forwarded.[7] John Muir, a distiller in Orkney, would be sent out in the fall to operate the planned distillery.[8]

In spite of the extensive preparations, the distillery was not erected by the Company at this time. A few of the settlers, "petty dealers," seem to have cornered the supply of barley in the settlement, thus driving up the price and making distilling impractical. At the same time, others, "Messrs. Logan and Ross," began to oppose the founding of a distillery on other grounds.[9] If Christie had not yet begun construction, he was ordered to consult the Council of Assiniboia once more to ascertain the views of the majority concerning the establishing

8 A view from the river of the distillery and cottage, by George Finlay in 1847. To the right are the fort and buildings. *(Glenbow Foundation.)*



of a distillery.[10]

The Council seemed unable to come to a firm conclusion and probably reversed its previous decision approving the project. The Governor and Committee, on their part, were unwilling to undertake a project to which they had only reluctantly extended approval unless they had the full support of the Council:

We notice the remonstrance of Messrs. Logan and Ross in reference to Distillation: that is a subject upon which there appears to be much difference of opinion among the principal inhabitants. In giving our assent to the establishment of a distillery at the Settlement two years ago, we did so very reluctantly from an apprehension that it might lead to intemperance and irregularities, on the earnest and repeated application of yourself and the Council, and if the opinion of the majority of the Council be unfavourable to the measure, we do not wish the still to be put into operation; on the contrary, if the majority of the Council and of the different inhabitants be desirous of establishing the distillery we have no desire to oppose their wishes, but in that case you will in council have to put such restrictions on the sale of spiritous liquors as to guard as much as possible against abuse.[11]

That fall, Simpson ordered Finlayson, who had taken Christie's place while the latter was on leave, to suspend the operation if construction had not already begun.[12] Apparently the latter was the case, and the following spring, Simpson postponed indefinitely any action on the matter while at the same time keeping the question open. If in the future a distillery were built, Monkman's Creek (which may have been the creek to the south of the fort) would be the site of the building:

With regard to the Distillery at Red River, I think it is well to keep that question pending from year to year instead of either commencing the work or abandoning the measure altogether, and after much conversation with Mr. Christie on the subject, he now agrees with us that Monkman's Creek is a better situation for the Distillery, whenever it may be established than the new fort, as there it would be difficult & expensive to get water from the river, and creek or swamp water, it is to be apprehended would be impregnated with salt.[13]

Thus the drawn out soul-searching by the Company's officials and their elaborate preparations went for naught. Even with the equipment for distilling in the colony, the Governor and Committee refrained from proceeding with the experiment for fear of offending important persons in the colony and in England.

Agitation by some settlers continued, however, urging that a distillery be established both to increase the amount of liquor available in the settlement (the Company's shops being the only legal outlet) and to consume some of the colony's produce, of which it was claimed there was a surplus. By this time it was also argued that a legal distillery would arrest the illegal trading and distillation of whiskey in the colony. In 1841, the Council of Assiniboia renewed the Company's privilege to "attempt any part of the process of making native spirits" while denying the right to other entrepreneurs who might be so inclined.[14] But there remained a vocal element in the settlement opposed to distillation by the Company.[15] As long as the opposition continued, the Company officials shied away from the contentious issue, refusing to take up a project which would offend an important segment of the community.

Finally, in 1843, they adopted a solution whereby distillation could be undertaken under the Company's monopoly while at the same time separating the company from the actual operation of the distillery; the right to distill would be farmed out by the Company to a respectable group in the community. An advertisement was published locally, 9 July 1843, asking for tenders "for the production of Native Malt Spirits."[16] A tender was submitted by a group of influential men — Andrew McDermot, James Sinclair, John Bunn, John Inkster, Thomas Thomas — who undertook to open a distillery working under an agreement which among other things stated the Company's right to delegate its monopoly of selling and distilling native spirits.[17] The Company apparently would have the right to oversee the distillers, and while the Governor and Committee again expressed their disapproval of distilling *per se,* they were appeased by the tight control which the Company would have over the conduct of the venture.[18]

In 1843, the new association went so far as to "engage Brown, Angus's predecessor in cookery as a labourer," but by 1844 they were ready to withdraw from the agreement.[19] The Company was not prepared to purchase more than 1,000 gallons of spirits annually and further, would not guarantee to buy the animals fattened on the "mash" byproduct of the distillery.[20] "The profit from feeding

Pigs, and *horned cattle* upon the mash and Grains, about the Distillery . . . [was] considered the chief emolument likely to accrue from the transaction, and without a ready market . . . for such," McDermot felt "it would be perfect folly to begin Distillation."[21]

If no one else in the settlement came forward to offer to distill under the Hudson's Bay Company conditions, Christie did not think that the Company itself should undertake it. As an alternative, more spirits could be sent out from England.

I am certainly of opinion that should no person hereafter come forward for entering upon distillation the Company ought likewise decline undertaking such an unpleasant and expensive business, [.] *two establishments are now about being completed and as neither the upper or lower forts are suitable for the proposed distillery, a third establishment will have to be raised and supported at no trifling expense.*[22]

To bolster his argument he mentioned a number of the non-fur-trading ventures introduced by the Company in the past which had failed miserably – a reminder which must have perturbed Simpson no end. A bit peevishly perhaps, Simpson asserted again that he felt "the most effectual means of putting it down . . . [illicit distillation] would be to establish a distillery & sell liquor cheap," but he agreed to try Christie's plan of greater importation "for a year or two."[23]

The settlers as usual were divided on the issue. However, when it was heard that a distillery would not be established by the Company, the agriculturists were "clamorous" in their reaction.[24] Perhaps in the face of this criticism and knowing Simpson's inclination to establish a distillery, Christie, in the spring, was ready to allow that given greater protection, a Company distillery might not be a bad thing. By now the checking of illicit manufacture of spirits and smuggling were major considerations:

I confess being ever exceedingly averse, to the erection of a public Distillery *in the settlement but am now apprehensive, that no other method is likely to check the smuggler, and therefore do not hesitate to recommend the establishment of a Distillery by the Company,* provided means can be devised *to effect adequate protection, and entirely prevent the clandestine manufacture of ardent spirits."*[25]

At its meeting of June, 1845, the Council of Assiniboia again requested that the Company distill in the settlement. It also formally adopted the minimum protection which Christie felt was necessary before the Company should commence such an operation.[26]

After nearly a decade of delay, work went ahead quickly on the Company's project – a speed induced by the imminent arrival of the Sixth Regiment, a body of men certain to be inclined to sample the distillery's product. Only one month after the Council's action in the matter, Christie wrote to Simpson announcing the beginning of construction at the lower fort:

We have commenced preparations for the erection of the intended Distillery, at the creek immediately above the lower fort, [.] *the bank has been excavated to a considerable depth, but nevertheless the water must be raised from the River to somewhat more than 24 feet in height, which we propose to accomplish with a common pump – wrought by oxen, and to employ the same power for grinding the malt – the necessary extent of mason work, for completing the foundations, furnaces and chimneys will I regret,* after this date *entirely stop the progress of the Fort wall and Bastions for a season – but with every possible means at our command, the Distillery works cannot be in operation next Winter,* [.] *in* [the] *course of the season, Barley will be received, in order to begin malting early next Spring.*[27]

Work continued into the fall and winter. In December, Christie made a progress report:

We are proceeding with the preparatory erections for the Distillery at the lower fort, and the houses will be ready for receiving Barley before the first March next, but the entire works cannot be completed before next Autumn, – which will not inconvenience as a sufficiency of Rum was imported to York Factory last autumn for the Service of Outfit 1846.[28]

Construction must have been completed by the following July as Simpson could speak of a "distillery and malting house lately erected near the Lower Fort."[29]

In the above letter, Simpson was planning for the accommodation of the detachment of the Sixth Regiment about to arrive in the Red River Settlement. According to Simpson, the troops at the lower fort would be given quarters inside the fort while the business of the Company would be conducted in the new building(s). This may have been the fate of the distillery but the malting house seems to have been put to proper use as early as that fall. In a memo to Christie

9 In this view of the fort in 1857 by John Fleming, two officers of the Canadian Rifles talk to two Indians in the foreground. At the extreme right is an early thatched log stable and in the distance are the cottage, warehouse, and distillery-brewery buildings. *(John Ross Robertson Collection, Metropolitan Toronto Central Library.)*

concerning the arrangements to be made for the troops, Simpson ordered that "2000 Bushels Barley . . . be converted into Beer for the use of the troops, not stronger than 8 gns. Beer to the Bushel."[30]

Some beer was brewed but the supplies proved to be inadequate for the hearty thirst of the men of the Sixth:

We have been going on for some time with supplies of Beer in the Canteens, in the proportion of about one pint per man daily, but all we can do is insufficient to meet the demand for drinkables both for officers and men, and have therefore increased the additional indent in Wines and Spirits, so as to be more able to meet the applications which are from time to time made on the Company's Stores.[31]

Two months later, Christie attributed the shortage of beer to the dearth of barley in the colony: "And with more abundant crops last autumn, we would have been enabled to afford much greater satisfaction by brewing a sufficiency of *Beer.*"[32] Many of the settlers were producing beer themselves to obtain a more lucrative return from their scanty grain supplies. Barley converted into beer would bring a much higher price than the grain itself.[33]

When the danger of a scarcity of grain loomed up again in 1847, Simpson ruled out distillation, but allowed some brewing if the troops demanded beer.

If the grain Crops should unfortunately fail this season, I think the Consumption of Barley in brewing or distillation should be exceedingly limited; but if it be absolutely necessary to supply the troops with beer, you may advance the price of barley to 3/ or 4/ charging a corresponding increase in the price of beer.[34]

Simpson's recommendations seem to have been followed. In 1848, for instance, Ballenden had at first expected to be able to begin distilling but a shortage of barley forced him to alter his plans.

I at one time expected to have got this winter a sufficient quantity of barley to have enabled us to commence distilling whiskey but now I fear I shall not, – I would not recommend commencing to distill with a less stock than 6,000 bushels, and I fear this season we shall not get above 1000.[35]

Finally, in 1849, the crops were "abundant" and Ballenden, almost eagerly, it seems, began preparations to distill whiskey. His letter to the Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company was filled with enthusiasm:

The Barley is exceedingly abundant, and as it has been thought proper, both by The Governor and Committee and the Council of Assiniboia, that distillation should be commenced here, I shall purchase a large quantity, with the view, if it is still deemed advisable, of commencing operations [this] *ensuing season. I would commence early next Spring but we have no person in the settlement capable of conducting the work. Allow me therefore, to recommend that a suitable person, capable of acting as Distiller, be engaged and sent out by the Ship next year. Should Their Honors agree to this, I would further suggest the propriety, of their consulting Chief Factor Christie on the subject, and authorizing him to engage the Distiller, as he knows, better than any other can, the description of person most required in this Settlement. I would also authorize him to purchase a new Still and Pumps, which might likewise be sent out next season.*[36]

The question of the distillery had been in the offing for such a long period of time that the equipment sent out in 1837 had become unserviceable and a new still and pumps were required.

The distillery was not destined to begin production at this time however; during the interval of time offered by the shortage of crops, the Governor and Committee reconsidered their previous approval and now decided against the manufacture of spirits in the settlement.

Distilling was not the responsibility of the fur-trade branch of the Company's operations and furthermore to undertake the "distillation of spirits" would be "particularly inexpedient" at the time.[37] Thus, in the spring of 1850, the Company was prepared to abandon the project for the present, if not permanently, in spite of the fact that the building and equipment for production were already in the settlement.

Beer was made regularly at the lower fort after 1846. Certainly there are frequent references in the 1850s to beer being sold in quantities in the shop,[38] and the beer seems to have been brewed at the lower fort rather than purchased from some outside source. In November, 1854, for example, John Folster was paid for 10 days and 4 nights brewing, and later in April, 1855, was paid for 13 days and 4 nights.[39] The Company also purchased quantities of hops from the settlers – in September, 1860, alone, this amounted to 700 pounds – and buying continued throughout the fall.[40] Entries

10 The nascent industrial area was photographed by H.L. Hime in 1858. From left to right are the distillery-brewery, cottage and warehouse. *(Public Archives of Canada.)*

in the accounts in 1861 indicate that brewing was taking place.

14 October, 1861
2½ yds. white cheese cloth to Brewery
½ pint Dem. Rum for brewers

18 October, 1861
50 lbs. Hops for brewing

1 November, 1861
1½ pints of rum to Brewers[41]

In 1863 and 1864, William Mactavish at Upper Fort Garry sent down to the lower fort for his supply of beer.[42]

Although the Company produced beer quite regularly in the 1850s and early 1860s, it may also have purchased some from an outside source. In 1866, for instance, Whiskey Thomas (who seems to have been quite a notorious character located on the road between the upper and lower fort) was accorded the following references in the accounts:

for 20 gns. beer 30/
for making 92 gns. beer 54/
for 60 bushels malt 12/[43]

It is not clear whether Thomas was using his own facilities or those of the Company.

The purchase of beer from an outside source (if indeed this happened) may indicate a decline or stoppage in the Company's activity toward the end of the 1860s. In the first two years of the journal, 1868-69, there is no reference to brewing being carried on at the lower fort; and in 1870-71 considerable activity at the malt house suggests that the brewing establishment was being put back into shape after a considerable period of disuse, or that it was being enlarged.[44]

The selected references from the journal illustrate the preparations made for brewing in that year.

1 November 1870	*two men digging a pit for Malt House*
10 November	*two men digging a malt pit*
11 November	*two men continue digging malt pit*
4 December	*four men working at Malt House*
19 December	*two carpenters working at Malt House*
27 March 1871	*John Corrigal cleaning out the Malt House*
28 March	*John Corrigal put 70 bushels barley in steep*
29 March	*John Corrigal put 35 bushels more in steep*
30 March	*John Corrigal continues making malt*
3 April	*one man cleaning out the malt kiln*
10 April	*two men making mash tubs*
11 April	*two men working at beer coolers and mash tubs*
	one man drying malt
14 April	*commenced making beer*
17 April	*two men taking barley out of the cistern and putting some more in steep*
18 April	*Put the first beer in the cellar, 228 gallons strong beer and 60 galls., small beer*
27 April	*one man drying malt*
9 May	*three men brewing*
10 August	*three men brewing*
8 November	*three men brewing beer.*[45]

Brewing was carried on almost the year round and on quite a large scale.[46] In 1873, men were installing a new boiler and building a "chimney for the brewer's boilers."[47] The improvements suggest that it was planned to brew for a considerably longer period.

Although brewing continued throughout the 1850s and 1860s, the opening of the distillery was repeatedly postponed. Almost a decade after the Governor and Committee's decision not to distill in 1850, the question was raised once again by one of the Company's officials, F.G. Johnson, the recorder, in 1857. Johnson pointed to the importation of raw liquor from the United States and the intemperance which it encouraged as reasons for suggesting a reconsideration of the Company's attitude. Total prohibition was impractical and he was inclined to favour the establishing of a distillery.

The considerations which seem to recommend the establishment of a distillery are obvious. The money which is expended in the purchase of ardent spirits is carried out of the Colony: The article imported is vile, deleterious, and retailed at a very high price, and its clandestine sale besides fostering habits of deceit and defiance, is from its very nature beyond the reach of due and proper regulation. Whereas distillation on the spot, besides being a source of direct profit to the distiller, to the revenue, and to the farmer, would furnish a pure, cheap, and comparatively innocuous article, and could be subjected to such regulations as have proved in all countries indispensable concomitants of the traffic in intoxicating drinks.[48]

He also reminded the Company officials that "the apparatus necessary for distilling is already on the spot and in the possession of the Company."[49] He

herefore recommended that the Com-
any undertake distillation itself rather
han resort to leasing the buildings and
quipment to private individuals. Simp-
on himself wrote to Smith, the Com-
any Secretary, reminding him that
'this question has been brought forward
rom time to time during the last 25
ears, but the decision has changed them
gainst a distillery, even after the
Company had erected the necessary
uilding & provided the apparatus for
conducting it on a large scale."[50]

A decision on the matter was post-
poned until the following summer when
Simpson would be in the Red River
Settlement. Then it was decided not to
put the distillery into operation, the main
reason for not doing so being again the
shortage of grain.

It was decided, while I was at the settlement, not to put it in operation at present, for a variety of reasons, the principal of which was the scarcity of grain. The distillery, if put in operation would have the effect of curtailing the already limited supply of food for the purpose of furnishing in greater abundance an article, the use of which it has always been our policy to discourage.[51]

The building was used for little other
han a storehouse throughout most of its
istory. In 1869, for instance, two men
ere heading up flour barrels "from the
Distillery" and in 1870 "all the men were
auling up wheat from the old distil-
ery."[52] In December it underwent some
epair and was mudded, but this was
robably only intended to keep the
uilding weathertight.[53]

In fact, the distillery does not seem to
ave been put into operation at all, and by the end of the 1870s, the brewery had also ceased production. There were several breweries located in the new province and they would provide an alternative and probably less expensive source of supply for the Company. The farm had by then been closed down and the lower fort had lost a number of its non-fur-trade functions. In April, 1880, the men were employed in "demolishing the brewery."

The Grist Mill

The Company first turned to private settlers to supply a mill to grind the wheat of the settlement farmers and its own extensive purchases. In 1850, it offered "every encouragement" for the erection of a mill at Sturgeon Creek and Andrew McDermot took advantage of the offer.[1] In exchange for the right to grind the Company's wheat for the next ten years he began operating a water mill.[2] Simpson worked out a similar agreement in 1853 with another settler.[3] By 1857 a steam mill was also in operation in the settlement and after a few delays was producing flour much superior in quality.[4] Several other water mills had been established by the 1860s.

The dependence on the private mills proved to be unsatisfactory however. It involved the Company in a great deal of expensive and time-consuming transportation, especially after the farm at the lower fort began production. Almost daily in the spring and fall, boats left the lower fort taking wheat above the upper fort to McDermot's steam mill or to Tait's and Hay's water mills located a few miles from the fort on small streams running into the Red River. Also the water mills were not always able to operate because of the fickle water supply.[5]

The expense of transportation and precarious timetable of the private mills probably persuaded the Company to establish its own steam mill at Lower Fort Garry in 1865. Men "working at the steam mill" in October, 1865, were probably engaged in its construction and in November, Samuel Taylor noted in his journal that a steam mill for the grinding

of wheat commenced operating at the lower fort.[6]

The mill was used in grinding both the Company's wheat and that of the surrounding farms. It operated mainly in the fall but it was also brought into service whenever sufficient quantities of wheat were available. In preparation for grinding, the boiler was cleaned, the millstone picked and the boiler pumped up. Cordwood for the steam engine's fires was brought from across the river. "Mr. Abell [the company engineer] with fireman, miller & flour packer" were employed in its operation along with the men who hauled the wheat to the mill and the flour away to various storage buildings.[7] Women made the bags and later sewed their tops after they had been filled with flour.

The Company had soon become very dependent upon the mill: when its boiler broke down in 1868, Mactavish stressed the need for its immediate replacement as "without the mill there will be no chance of providing the quantity of flour now required for the trade."[8] The grist mill remained an important operation as long as the farm continued to produce large quantities of wheat and it received business from the surrounding settlement. In 1873, there was even talk of constructing a new mill,[9] and machinery for an immense flouring mill was moved to the lower fort from the White Horse Plain. However, the machinery was moved again in the following year to Upper Fort Garry where the Company began milling on a grand scale. The small mill at the lower fort continued in limited production through the 1870s until 1879, when in the face of competition from smaller private mills in the area it was finally abandoned.

The Sawmill

The Company first depended on a pit saw for the work in conjunction with the construction of the buildings at the lower fort. Although private mills were probably used later, there are still references in the early 1860s to "pit saw files" in the accounts and in correspondence.[10] Even after a sawmill was established at the lower fort, a pit saw was used for specialized jobs such as cutting roots for York boats.[11]

When the sawmill was constructed at the lower fort is a matter of some confusion. It appears to have been associated with the grist mill and shortly after it was completed in November, 1865, John McLeod was paid for "9 days at sawing mill."[12] However, in July of the following year, Samuel Taylor noted "we began to make a new saw mill at the Stone Fort."[13] Even later, in 1868, the journal notes that "Mr. Abell with six men and the engineer are constructing the saw mill."[14] The earlier efforts may have been temporary measures to convert the grist mill to sawing.

The steam sawmill was definitely in operation in the late 1860s using the same source of power as the grist mill. In 1868, for example, the mill was converted from grinding to sawing in the space of one afternoon: "the steam mill grinding wheat for settlers until two o'clock p.m. after they commenced sawing some timber."[15] And in 1869, Mr. Abell and three men were "preparing the steam mill for sawing."[16] A reference to men repairing the "flooring etc., of sawing room"[17] suggests that the sawing was carried on in a special section of the mill.

The mill probably sawed for the settlers as well as the Company, which usually had a stock of lumber on hand for building purposes. Logs were floated to the mill on the river and hauled up to be sawn.[18] The sawn lumber was stored by the mill or taken inside the fort for protection.[19] The sawmill probably continued in production as long as the grist mill was operating.

Lime Burning

Lime burning was a common activity in the Red River Settlement as in any pioneer community where there was construction in stone. At the lower fort, lime would have been needed for the construction of the very first building in 1830-31, and the need continued. With the development of the farm there was a heavy demand for the lime for use in fertilizer. By 1861, there was at least one kiln for burning lime and a shed near the byres for storing the finished product.[20] The facilities and proximity of quantities of limestone made Lower Fort Garry the supplier of lime for all of the Hudson's Bay Company posts in the Red River district. In 1863, for instance, Mactavish wanted ten bushels of lime from the lower fort for the upper fort and also twenty bushels for the post at the White Horse Plain. This was in addition to the amount required for the needs of the lower fort.[21]

In 1890, a private operator, Francis Philpott, made an agreement with the Company to burn the limestone in the old foundations of the buildings at the

creek at the south of the fort. The arrangement in the end proved unsatisfactory, and in 1899 he was stopped from taking stone. His two kilns remained, however, and were described by his son. *His father came out from England in 1887 and ran the lime kilns at Lower Fort. He helped his father and described them to me. He said he is sure the lower courses of stone will still be there if they were dug out. There were two of them. They were built on a sloped piece of ground, and were about 20 feet deep. The walls were 10 to 12 inches of stone not cut to shape, but just built up and the spaces filled with clay. The grates were steel rails from the CPR when he worked in it. They would pile wood even green poplar logs about 4½ feet high on top of the grates and then pile limestone on top and cover with rubble stone to hold the heat. They would keep it going for 7, 8, or 9 days, feeding logs in through the opening above the grates. It would get to a white hot heat. Farmers would come and buy the lime for 14¢ a bushel. They would use it for white wash or for making lime plaster.*[22]

The later Philpott kilns, located on the south side of the creek, may also mark the location of the Company's own earlier kiln.

The Blacksmith

There were probably a blacksmith and forge at Lower Fort Garry almost from the time it was established. The Company's own animals, the Sixth Regiment's mounts, the Company's horse-breeding establishment and later the oxen would all require attention.

By the 1860s, the blacksmith, Norman Morrison, not only did work for the lower fort but also for the upper fort. He was assisted by "Old Cox" who did various odd jobs about the fort. Morrison would often be sent up to Upper Fort Garry to work on the horses stationed there, especially to shoe Governor Dallas' mounts; or the animals would be sent down.[23]

The smith was called upon to do a wide variety of chores. For the Company he made scythes, rat spears, bilge pumps, hauling pins for oxen, mouse traps, stove pipes, bedsteads and many other hardware items for buildings, boats and the mills. He repaired the wagons, wheels, machinery, and did some work also for settlers.[24] The work was carried out in the forge or blacksmith's shop located between the creek and the fort. The building was destroyed by an explosion and fire in 1877.[25] It is not known if another forge was constructed to take its place.

The Lathe Room

When the lower fort became the depot for the steamboats operating on Lake Winnipeg and the repair station for those on the Red River, the "machine shops" mentioned by Robinson were added to the facilities.[26] In 1869, a "turning lathe" was brought to the fort and a building constructed to accommodate it.[27] The lathe was driven by its own engine[28] and was probably used for turning out parts for the steamboat machinery. When the depot was moved to Colvile Landing the lathe was no longer used and with other machinery was eventually taken away.

The Cooper

In 1870-71, there was a cooper working at the lower fort. The need for a craftsman to make and repair the kegs for beer and other items points to one being there earlier. In 1870, he was "heading casks," and in 1871, was "cutting up oak for barrel heads" and "preparing beer casks."[29] He probably worked in the carpenter's shop or in part of one of the other buildings.

The Fishery

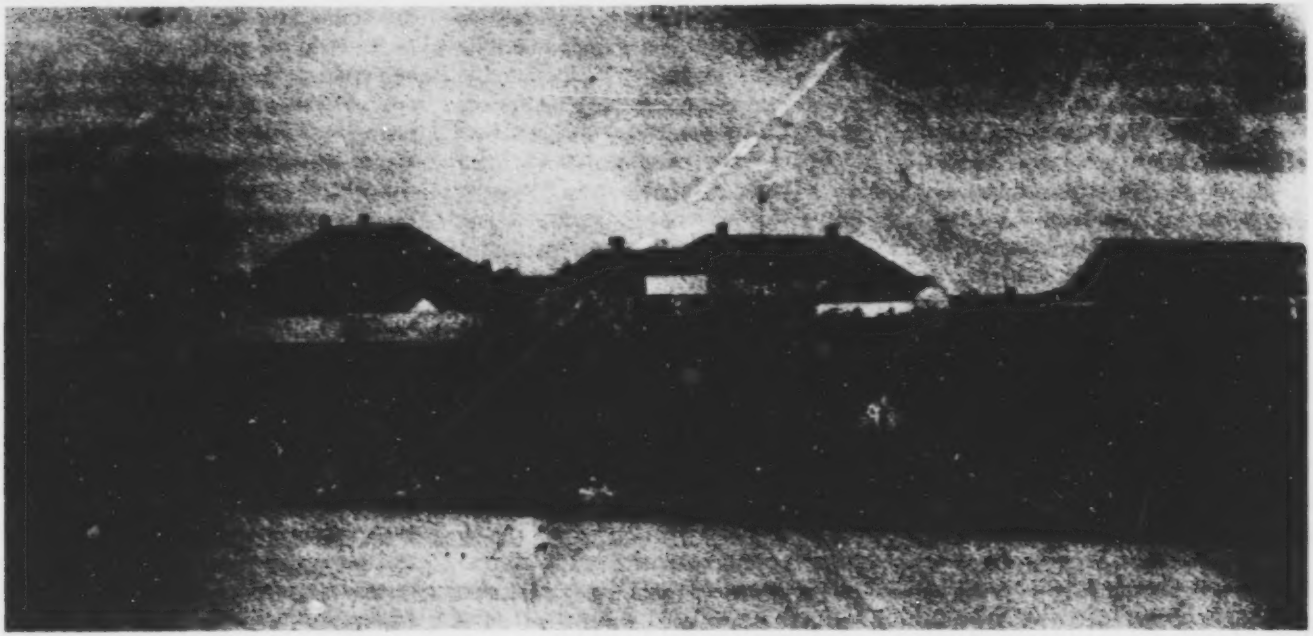
At most of the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company fishing was an important source of food. At Lower Fort Garry a fishery was probably started as soon as the fort was established; in 1852, when Bishop David Anderson visited the fort, he found the Indian fisherman busy in the river in front of the fort.

The fishing was going on vigorously. We watched Indians taking the goldeyes with a scoop, something like a shrimp net, with a long handle. With it they got a single fish, now and then three or four times in succession; at other times they brought up as many as two or three at once. These the Indian threw over his head and they were immediately killed by his wife, who sat higher up the bank. They had in this way caught 300 in one day. A few sturgeon had been taken in the small creek at the side of the Fort. The rapidity of the current almost made one giddy to look at it. It was running at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour.[30]

The Indians traded the fish at the lower fort shop where the accounts frequently note the buying of one or two from Indian women who came to barter.

Gill nets instead of scoops were

11 Although the fort was then in decline, most of the buildings remained in the late 1870s. The large Northern Department warehouse stood by the gate. At the extreme right, outside the fort, are the ox stable and the stableman's house. (*Public Archives of Manitoba.*)



preferred by the Company employees. These were made at the lower fort by "Old Daniel" both for its own use and for the upper fort.[31] As late as the 1860s, sturgeon were caught with nets in the vicinity of the fort;[32] but it was more usual to fish in Lake Winnipeg. In 1869, for example, men were sent there with fishing equipment. They were unsuccessful in the lake and, caught by the ice, were forced to leave the boat at "the fishery at Black River."[33] As 1869 was a year of crop failure, the fishing expedition was probably an attempt to relieve the food shortage.

The fish traded in the shop and caught by the Company seem to have been used only for local consumption. There is no record in the journals (1868-74) of their being preserved and shipped out, while in the mess accounts there are frequent references to their consumption by the officers of the Company and occupying troops.

The Ice House

Each winter the ice house, located in the southeast bastion of the fort, was filled with ice for the following year. The operation took place early in the year when men from the fort cut ice in the river and hauled it up to the fort, where it was stored.[34] Sometimes fresh meat was kept in the ice house until consumed or preserved in another manner.

Biscuit Making

Each spring the oven in the bake house was prepared for the making of "biscuit for exportation,"[35] and from March through June the bakers were busy at their task. The biscuit was then packed up in casks for remote posts such as Norway House or in bags for Upper Fort Garry.[36]

The 1870s were largely years of decline for Lower Fort Garry. As the settlement, now a new province of the Dominion of Canada, developed to maturity, many of the services of the lower fort were displaced. Improvements in transportation made the large farm and oxen unnecessary. Gradually the various functions of the fort were stripped away.

At first, however, the lower fort was able to share in the new era with the turn of the Company to steamboats. Its position on the lower Red River made it an ideal location for the depot for the Lake Winnipeg steamboats. Goods for the northern posts were brought over the southern route and stored at the lower fort until they could be transferred to the *Colvile* for conveyance across the lake. The old *Chief Commissioner* stripped of her machinery sat at the mouth of the creek serving as a floating warehouse.

Then came the railway. When the tracks of the Canadian Pacific reached Selkirk, the Hudson's Bay Company had a spur line constructed to Cook's Creek where a more effective linkup could be made with the steamboats. The new depot, Colvile Landing, took over the supply of the Northern Department in 1880. To add insult to injury, the large warehouse inside the lower fort and the buildings by the creek were taken away to form the new depot. Even the old *Chief Commissioner* was dragged down the river and hauled out of the water to serve out the remainder of its days as a warehouse at Colvile Landing.

The lower fort was left with its sales shop and little else. There was even talk of transferring the fort to the Land Department for sale. Instead parts were rented

12 By the turn of the century, only the cottage with its detached kitchen and the barn at the extreme right remained of the industrial buildings at the creek south of the fort. (*National Historic Sites Service.*)

to the Manitoba government for temporary use as an asylum. One by one the decaying industrial and agricultural buildings were sold off for their materials. When the Canadian Pacific Railway gave notice in 1887 that it intended to close its spur line to Colvile Landing, there was some thought of returning the depot to Lower Fort Garry for now the Selkirk-Winnipeg line passed only 200 feet west of the fort. Instead West Selkirk got the nod. The proximity of the railway did give the lower fort a slight resurgence when it turned to the production of cordwood for the Fort Garry mills and other steam plants in Winnipeg, but this proved to be a short-lived and rather costly venture. Also with the growing responsibilities of the Winnipeg sales shop, the supervision of the posts of the Lake Winnipeg district – the Company shops at Fort Alexander, the Indian Settlement, Dog Head, Berens River, Fisher River and Little Grand Rapid – were transferred to the clerk in charge of the lower fort. But the fur trade at these posts was declining and the district was eventually discontinued.

By the end of the century even the sales shop faced hostile competition from the shops in Selkirk and the polished department stores in the growing city of Winnipeg. In 1911, the shop was finally closed and the fort eventually leased to the Motor Country Club. Only a few decrepit buildings and the odd piece of foundation survived to indicate the past industrial and agricultural activities of the lower fort.

Lower Fort Garry Comes of Age

1 Henry M. Robinson, *The Great Fur Land, or Sketches of Life in the Hudson's Bay Territory* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle, 1879), pp. 80-1. Although his book was published in 1879, many of Robinson's impressions seem to have been formed at an earlier date. *See* his n., p. 78: "The aspect of Lower Fort Garry as well as the character of the business transacted there, has undergone considerable modification within the last decade."

2 An indication of the amount of goods stored at the lower fort can be obtained from the following inventory of provisions on hand immediately before the arrival of the Canadian Rifles in 1857. This was before the establishment of the farm and consisted of goods bought from the settlers. "Statement of Provisions, Grain, and Cattle on hand in lower Red River District, Outfit 1856

648	bushels barley
56	casks saltbeef
4	cwt. biscuit
466	No^{s}. Hams cured
5	Kegs Lard 8 gns.
1,350	Hs. Meat dried
35½	firkins butter
590	Hs. Cheese
39	Nos. cheeks Pigs dried
1,879	Cwt. flour 1st & 2nd
10,686	Hs. Hard Grease
88	bushels oats
23	bushels peas
922	Bags Pemmican Com.
314	Tongues buffalo
13,886	bushels wheat

Cattle purchased since 1 June 1856

3	cows
38	oxen
44	pigs

Cattle old stock

3	bulls
6	cows
7	calves
5	oxen full grown
1	oxen not full grown"

Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter cited as HBCA), Winnipeg: Miscellaneous Items, John Swanston, 24 February 1857, p. 591, B.235/z/3.

The Farm: Early Approaches

1 Roderick Campbell, *The Father of St. Kilda* (London: Russell, 1901), p. 112.

2 Henry M. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 80-1.

3 For a succinct discussion of the earlier farms, *see* Alvin C. Gluek, Jr., *Minnesota and the Manifest Destiny of the Canadian Northwest, A Study in Canadian-American Relations* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), pp. 20-5.

4 HBCA, Governor George Simpson Correspondence Inward (hereafter cited as Simpson Inward), Governor and Committee to Simpson, 9 March 1836, pp. 160-1, D.5/4.

5 HBCA, Governor George Simpson Correspondence Books Outward (General) (hereafter cited as Simpson Outward), Simpson to Christie, 20 February 1838, p.11, D.4/24.

6 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Committee, London, to Chief Factors and Chief Traders of the Northern Department, 7 March 1838, p. 11, D.5/5.

7 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Finlayson, 1 March 1840, p. 71, D.4/5.

8 Ibid., Simpson to Governor and Committee, 20 June 1841, p. 147, D.4/58.

9 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Thom to Simpson, 8 August 1842, p. 185, D.5/7.

10 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from H.B.C. Posts – Winnipeg (hereafter cited as Winnipeg), W. Mactavish to W.G. Smith, 10 February 1858, p. 238, A.11/96.

11 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Committee to Simpson, 4 April 1849, p. 21, D.5/25.

12 Arthur S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to* 1870-71 (Toronto: Nelson, 1939), p. 664. *See also* Isobel Finlayson, "York Boat Journal," *The Beaver*, Outfit 282 (December 1951), p. 36: "The Company do not farm their own land but grain and all other necessaries for the consumption of this place as well as for that

of many other posts in the Country, are purchased from the Settlers, in order to give them a market for the surplus produce of their farms."

13 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 11 January 1847, p. 63, D.5/19.
14 Ibid., 28 November 1848, p. 373, D.5/23.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid., Black to Simpson, 29 November 1850, p. 282, D.5/29.
17 Ibid., Colvile to Simpson, 22 May 1851, p. 730, D.5/30. John Black was the clerk then in charge of the lower fort.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Eden Colvile, *London Correspondence Inward from Eden Colvile, 1849-1852*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956), p. 245, Colvile to Simpson, 24 August 1851. The mares were all at the lower fort: ibid., p. 218, Colvile to Simpson, 30 May 1851.
21 Ibid.
22 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Black, 1 December 1853, p. 137, D.4/46.
23 Ibid., p. 139, D.4/46.
24 Ibid., Memo to Chief Factor Swanston, 28 June 1855, pp. 69-70, D.4/50; Simpson to Christie, 26 June 1856, pp. 110-1, D.4/51; memo to Chief Factor Swanston, 26 June 1856, pp. 807-8, D.4/76A; Simpson to Murray, 21 June 1858, p. 181, D.4/54; Simpson to Mactavish, 29 June 1860, p. 113, D.4/57.
25 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 23 April 1864, p. 676, B.235/b/11. Six horses were sent down to bring back Governor Dallas and his party from the United States.
26 Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. 245, Colvile to Simpson, 24 August 1851.
27 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Black, 2 July 1853, p. 86, D.4/46.
28 Ibid.
29 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Black to Simpson, 23 August 1853, p. 561, D.5/37.
30 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Black, 1 December 1853, p. 137, D.4/46.
31 Ibid., Simpson to Swanston, 4 December 1856, p. 69, D.4/52.
32 Ibid., 17 January 1857, p. 108, D.4/52.
33 HBCA, Winnipeg, C. F. James R. Clare to Fraser, 10 April 1865, p. 34, A.11/98.
34 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Cary, 28 February 1838, p. 123, D.4/23.
35 Ibid., 31 May 1838, p. 162, D.4/23.
36 Ibid., Simpson to Governor and Committee, 30 June 1857, p. 34, D.4/77 (enclosure in book).
37 Ibid., Memo for Mactavish, 5 July 1857, p. 32, D.4/76B.
38 HBCA, Winnipeg, W. Mactavish to W.G. Smith, 6 September 1857, pp. 160-1, A.11/96.
39 Ibid., p. 161, A.11/96.
40 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 6 September 1857, p. 234, D.5/44.
41 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Mactavish, 21 October 1857, p. 772, D.4/77.
42 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Committee to Simpson, 16 April 1858, p. 382, D.5/46.

The Operation of the Farm

1 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to J.C. and H.C. Burbank, 8 June 1858, pp. 152-3, D.4/54.
2 Ibid., Simpson to Governor and Committee, 24 June 1858, p. 871, D.4/78.
3 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Griffin, 29 April 1863, p. 8, B.235/b/11.
4 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Thomas Fraser, 22 October 1858, p. 657, D.4/78.
5 HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Post Journals (hereafter cited as Journal), 3 and 4 November 1873, B.303/a/1.
6 HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Account Books (hereafter cited as Accounts), 5 August 1865, p. 5, B.303/d/8. "Charlotte Swain paid 20/ – for the month's milking." This is only one of many entries.
7 HBCA, Accounts, 5 July 1861, p. 53, B.303/d/3a. The accounts mention the issue of a padlock for "the dairy."
8 HBCA, Journal, 3 and 4 November 1873; 19 June 1872.
9 *See*, for example, ibid., 10 October 1868 and 13 November 1873; 15 November 1871.
10 Ibid., 10 October 1868; 12 November 1868; 7 November 1868; 19 December 1870; 6 and 9 November 1868; 5 April 1869. This seems to indicate the presence of a smoke house.
11 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Alexander Murray, 18 May 1863, p. 60, B.235/b/11.
12 Ibid., Mactavish to Davis, 16 September 1864, p. 1,198, B.235/b/11.
13 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Mactavish, 21 October 1858, pp. 19-20, D.4/55.
14 Ibid., Simpson to J.C. Burbank, 4 June 1859, p. 154, D.4/55.
15 Ibid., Simpson to McKenzie, 11 July 1859, pp. 23-5, D.4/56.
16 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to George Davis, 2 May 1863, p. 27, B.235/b/11.
17 HBCA, Winnipeg, J. Clare to Fraser, 10 April 1865, p. 34, A.11/98.
18 Ibid., Mactavish to William McKay, 2 May 1863, p. 25, B.235/b/11.
19 Roderick Campbell, op. cit., p. 115.
20 *See* HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, William Mactavish correspondence, B.235/b.
21 *See* HBCA, Journal, for various references.
22 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 23 April 1864, p. 676, B.235/b/11.
23 HBCA, Journal, 20 October 1871.
24 *See*, for example, HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 27 April 1859, p. 167, D.5/49; Sir James Carnegie, 9th Earl of Southesk, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1875), p. 358.
25 HBCA, Accounts, 18 October 1861, p. 58, B.303/d/1.
26 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Reverend John Black, 4 March 1864, p. 603, B.235/b/11.
27 Henry M. Robinson, op. cit., p. 81.

28 HBCA, Journal, November 1868 references; ibid., 23 October 1871.
29 Ibid., 23 October 1868; *see* ibid., 15 January 1869, 17 January 1868, 26 January 1869, for examples.
30 Sir James Carnegie, op. cit., p. 358.
31 *See* HBCA, Journal, 28 October 1870, for example.
32 Roderick Campbell, "Reminiscences of H.B.C. Pioneers. I: Alexander Lillie," *The Beaver,* Vol. 4, No. 1 (October 1923), pp. 16-7.
33 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 6 September 1857, p. 234, D.5/44.
34 Ibid., enclosure in letter, Mactavish to Simpson, 12 December 1858, p. 709, D.5/47, dated Lower Fort Garry, 12 November 1858, signed Alexander R. Lillie.
35 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Memo for Chief Factor William Mactavish, 9 June 1858, p. 153, D.4/54; *also* Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 19 August 1858, p. 171, D.5/47.
36 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Memo for Messrs. Burbank, 11 July 1859, p. 27, D.4/56.
37 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to the Governor, Chief Factors and Chief Traders, 8 December 1858, p. 695, D.5/47.
38 Ibid., Enclosure in Mactavish to Simpson, 12 December 1858, p. 709, D.5/47, dated Lower Fort Garry, 12 November 1858, signed Alexander Lillie.
39 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Mactavish, 11 January 1859, p. 74, D.4/55.
40 HBCA, Winnipeg, Mactavish to Thomas Fraser, 21 November 1859, pp. 39-45, A.11/96.
41 Roderick Campbell, *The Father of St. Kilda* (London: Russell, 1901), p. 112.
42 Roderick Campbell, "Reminiscences of H.B.C. Pioneers. I: Alexander Lillie," *The Beaver,* Vol. 4, No. 1 (October 1923), pp. 16-7.
43 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Governor, Chief Factors and Chief Traders, 8 December 1859, p. 465, D.5/50.
44 HBCA, Winnipeg, Mactavish to Thomas Fraser, 19 August 1860, p. 459, A.11/96. *See also* Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 14 September 1860, p. 581, D.5/52: "Nearly all the grain throughout the Settlement has now been cut down, the harvest will be an abundant one, the yield at the Lower Fort will probably be between 3000 & 3500 bushels of wheat."
45 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – William Mactavish, Mactavish to Thomas Fraser, 23 October 1861, pp. 153-4, A.12/42.
46 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Lillie, 9 December 1861, p. 878, B.235/b/10; Ibid., 11 August 1863, p. 262.
47 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Memo for Chief Factor Swanston, 28 June 1855, pp. 68-9, D.4/50; Isaac Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913), p. 148.
48 Isaac Cowie, op. cit., p. 149.
49 HBCA, Journal, various entries, 1868-70.
50 Ibid., 1 June 1870.
51 Ibid., entries 1870-74.
52 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 6 September 1857, p. 234, D.5/44.
53 HBCA, Winnipeg, Mactavish to Fraser, 19 August 1860, p. 459, A.11/96; Joseph Hargrave, *Red River* (Montreal: J. Lavell, 1871), p. 176.
54 This varies little from year to year. *See* HBCA, Journal, and Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, 1863-64, B.235/b/11.
55 These are selections only and one reference to each form of activity has been used. Often each operation continued for several days; that is, the planting of potatoes or turnips might have taken up to a week or more to accomplish.
56 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 25 April 1864, p. 678, B.235/b/11.
57 HBCA, Journal, 28 April 1869.
58 Ibid., 5 April 1869: "Four men pointing and peeling pickets for field fence." For the appearance of the fence, *see* sketch, 1859, Figure 6.
59 Ibid., 11 June 1860.
60 Ibid., 1 October 1868.
61 Ibid., examples, 26 June, 1 July 1869.
62 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 27 May 1864, p. 770, B.235/b/11: "As soon as the crops are in break out new ground whenever you have men unemployed who are capable of ploughing."
63 HBCA, Journal, 26 June 1869.
64 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 6 August 1863, p. 309, B.235/b/11.
65 HBCA, Journal, 30 April 1870.
66 Ibid., 27 October 1868.
67 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Mactavish to Simpson, 19 August 1858, p. 171, D.5/47; Governor and Committee to Simpson, 16 April 1858, p. 382, D.5/46.
68 HBCA, Journal, 20 July 1865; 24 July 1869.
69 Ibid., 15 July 1869; 2 October 1869.
70 Ibid., 20 June 1870.
71 HBCA, Accounts, pp. 12-3, B.303/d/8; Journal, 15 October 1869.
72 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – William Mactavish, Mactavish to the Governor of the H.B.C., 26 January 1869, p. 162, A.12/45.
73 Ibid.

Boat Building

1 For a complete article on the York boats, *see* Richard Glover, "York Boats," *The Beaver,* Outfit 279 (March 1949), pp. 19-23.
2 A.A. McDonald, "H.B.C. Inland Transport. Building the York Boats," *The Beaver,* Vol. 4, No. 1 (October 1923), p. 19.
3 Rupert's Land. Northern Department. Council, *The Minutes of the Council of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land, 1830 to 1843* (n.p.: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1913), p. 815.
4 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Christie, 5 July 1847, p. 67, D.4/36.
5 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 21 March 1864, p. 631, B.235/b/11.

6 HBCA, Accounts, 1 June 1861, p. 52, B.303/d/3a.
7 *See,* for example, HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 25 April 1864, p. 678, B. 235/b/11.
8 HBCA, Journal, 19 February 1869.
9 A.A. McDonald, op. cit., pp. 19-21.
10 HBCA, Journal, 2 November 1868.
11 Ibid., 17 October 1871.
12 Manitoba. Public Archives, Samuel Taylor's Journal, entries for June 1865, May 1866, June 1866.
13 HBCA, Journal, 30 June 1868; 4 May 1869.
14 For examples, *see* ibid., 17 March, 27 March, 9 April 1869.
15 Ibid., 1869, selected references.
16 Ibid., 26 April 1869.
17 Bruce Peel, "First Steamboats on the Saskatchewan," *The Beaver,* Outfit 295 (Autumn 1964), p. 18.
18 HBCA, Journal, 1871-72, selected references.
19 Ibid., 1872.
20 Ibid., 19 August 1872.
21 Ibid., August 1872.
22 Ibid., 29 September 1872.
23 Molly McFadden, "Steamboats on the Red," *The Beaver,* Outfit 281 (September 1950), pp. 25-9.

Brewing and Distilling

1 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – Sir George Simpson, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 18 July 1831, p. 376, A.12/1.
2 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Council to Simpson, 15 February 1837, pp. 237-8, D.5/4.
3 Ibid., There is a "still" in the present museum collection at Lower Fort Garry.
4 Ibid.
5 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Alexander Christie, 10 July 1837, p. 64, D.4/23.
6 Ibid., 20 July 1837, p. 66, D.4/23.
7 Ibid., In a later document the "malt roller" is referred to as a "malt mill." "The seeds applied for, likewise the Bean crusher or Malt Mill are forwarded, there is no such machine as 'Passmore's Bean crusher' known in London." Ibid., Simpson to George Cary, 31 May 1838, p. 159, D.4/23. *See also* HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Council to Chief Factors and Traders of the Northern Department, 7 March 1838, p. 12, D.5/5: "The Malt Mill, copper, and other articles connected with the Distillery, applied for will be forwarded by the Ship."
8 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Christie, 20 February 1838, p. 121, D.4/23. Muir was in fact sent out; in 1847, he was at the establishment. "John Muir, I think, would be a very fit man for the Canteen, if not required for the brewery." Ibid., Simpson to Christie, 5 July 1847, p. 47, D.4/36.
9 Ibid., Simpson to Christie, 31 May 1838, pp. 161-2, D.4/23.
10 Ibid.
11 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Committee to Simpson, 20 March 1839, p. 117b, D.5/5.
12 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Finlayson, 15 November 1839, p. 58, D.4/25.
13 Ibid., 1 March 1840, pp. 70-1, D.4/25.
14 Edmund H. Oliver, ed., *The Canadian North-West, its Early Development and Legislative Records* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1914-15), Vol. 1, pp. 300-1, "Minutes of a Council held at Fort Garry on the 25th day of June, one thousand eight hundred and forty one."
15 *See,* for instance, HBCA, Simpson Outward, 18 June 1843, p. 74, D.4/28.
16 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Inward, pp. 107ff., B.235/c/1, collection of three letters on the matter.
17 *See* ibid., and Simpson Inward, Thom to Simpson, 12 August 1843, p. 433, D.5/8; Enclosure in Thom to Simpson, 2 July 1843, p. 332, D.5/8.
18 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Committee to Simpson, 1 June 1844, pp. 269-70, D.5/11.
19 Ibid., Thom to Simpson, 12 August 1843, p. 433, D.5/8.
20 Ibid., A. Christie to Simpson, 10 August 1844, pp. 154-6, D.5/12.
21 Ibid., p. 155, D.5/12.
22 Ibid.
23 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to A. Christie, 2 December 1844, p. 44, D.4/32.
24 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 27 December 1844, p. 585, D.5/12.
25 Ibid., 16 April 1845, p. 426, D.5/13.
26 Edmund H. Oliver, ed., op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 316, "Minutes of a Council of the Governor and Council of Assiniboia;" ibid., p. 323. *See also* HBCA, Simpson Inward, Report of Adam Thom, p. 350, D.5/13.
27 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 28 July 1845, p. 194, D.5/14.
28 Ibid., 30 December 1845, pp. 626-7, D.5/15.
29 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – Sir George Simpson, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 23 July 1846, as quoted in Dale Miquelon *"A Brief History of Lower Fort Garry."* It is not known whether one or two buildings were constructed. *See* discussion at end of chapter.
30 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Memo to Chief Factor Christie, 21 September 1846, p. 53, D.4/35.
31 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 13 November 1846, p. 335, D.5/18. John Muir seems to have been in charge of the brewery. *See* HBCA, Winnipeg: Miscellaneous Items, Memo to Sir George Simpson, 28 June 1847, p. 389, B.235/z/3. "If no Barley can be obtained, John Muir might attend to the canteen, – or when employed Brewing, William Dawes could do the duty." And HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Christie, 5 July 1847, p. 67, D.4/36, quote cited in n. 8 above.
32 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 11 January 1847, p. 62, D.5/19.
33 Ibid.
34 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Christie, 5 July 1847, p. 66, D.4/36. In reply to Christie asking permission to raise the purchase price of barley, HBCA, Winnipeg: Miscellaneous Items, Memo to

Simpson, 28 June 1847, p. 388, B.235/z/3.

35 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Ballenden to Simpson, 30 December 1848, p. 562, D.5/23.

36 HBCA, Winnipeg, Ballenden to Secretary Archibald Barclay, H.B.C., 28 November 1849, p. 291, A.11/95.

37 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Governor and Committee to Simpson, 10 April 1850, p. 58, D.5/28.

38 *See,* for example, the 24 gallons of beer sold to John E. Harriott, HBCA, Accounts, 8 November 1854, p. 40, B.303/d/1: *also* ibid., 23 December 1854, p. 41, and 1 March, p. 42. *See also* entries under other names.

39 HBCA, Accounts, Petty Cash, 1 November 1845, B.303/d/1, and ibid., 7 April 1855. The account books are by no means complete and the year 1854 may have been the exception rather than the rule in the brewing and selling of beer at the lower fort. Circumstances point, however, to its being typical. There are similar references in the 1860s.

40 HBCA, Accounts, Country Produce, pp. 30ff., B.303/d/2. The hops may also have been purchased for export.

41 Ibid., pp. 57-8, B.303/d/3a.

42 *See,* for example, HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 7 November 1863, p. 403, B.235/b/11, and 23 April 1864, p. 676.

43 HBCA, Accounts, 5 December 1866, p. 178, B.303/d/8.

44 HBCA, Journal, 1870-71.

45 Ibid., selected entries, 1870-71.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid., February to April 1873.

"11 February — four men mudding the roof of the malt house.

14 February — four men working at the Brewery.

19 February — seven men working at the pillar for the boiler in the brew house.

24 February — two masons building the chimney for the brewer's boilers.

9 April — got the new boiler taken up about 30 feet."

48 HBCA, Winnipeg, Governor Johnston of Assiniboia to Secretary W.G. Smith, H.B.C., 1 September 1856, p. 95, A.11/96.

49 Ibid., p. 96.

50 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Smith, 18 October 1856, p. 524, D.4/76A.

51 Ibid., Simpson to Governor and Committee, 30 June 1857, pp. 44-5, D.4/77 (Enclosure in book.).

52 HBCA, Journal, 27 May 1869; 27 June 1870.

53 Ibid., 14 and 19 December 1870. Under 17 February 1873, two masons and two labourers were working at the boiler in the "distillery" but this was more likely the brew house as work was then under way installing a new brewer's boiler.

Other Industrial Activities

1 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Ballenden to Simpson, 30 January 1850, pp. 177-8, D.5/27.

2 Ibid., McDermot to Simpson, 7 August 1851, pp. 237-8, D.5/31; *also* Swanston to Governor, Chief Factors and Chief Traders of the Northern Department, 9 December 1856, p. 441, D.5/42.

3 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Memo for Chief Trader Black, 2 July 1853, p. 86, D.4/46.

4 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Swanston to Simpson, 5 January 1857, p. 20, D.5/43.

5 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Murray, 26 July 1863, p. 274, B.235/b/11: "By the Boat you can send up some wheat to the Steam Mill to be ground as there is no chance of the water mills grinding much at least till late in the fall."

6 HBCA, Accounts, October and November 1865, p. 30, B.303/d/8; Manitoba. Public Archives, Samuel Taylor's Journal, November 1865. The journal also contains information concerning the construction of the mill.

7 HBCA, Journal, 29 February 1869.

8 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – William Mactavish, Mactavish to Smith, 28 April 1868, p. 55, A.12/45.

9 HBCA, Journal, 15 August 1873.

10 *See,* for example, HBCA, Accounts, 1 June 1861, p. 51, B.303/d/3a; *see,* for example, HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 7 November 1863, p. 403, B.235/b/11.

11 HBCA, Journal, January and February 1869, 18 January, "two men sawing (pine) roots for boat timbers;" *also* 16 February 1869, "two men sawing boat wood with the pit saw."

12 HBCA, Accounts, 9 December 1865, p. 45, B.303/d/8.

13 Manitoba. Public Archives, Samuel Taylor's Journal, July 1866.

14 HBCA, Journal, 1 October 1868.

15 Ibid., 20 November 1868.

16 Ibid., 8 February 1869.

17 Ibid., 1 September 1869.

18 *See,* for example, ibid., 24 May 1872; "eight men and two pairs of mules hauling up oak timber from the river to the mill for the Saskatchewan Steamboat."

19 Ibid., 10 October 1868: "two men hauling up the sawn timber from steam mill, we are obliged to pile it up within the fort walls on account of the Indians stealing and burning the boards."

20 HBCA, Accounts, p. 57, B.303/d/3a.

21 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Davis, 21 December 1863, p. 478, B.235/b/11.

22 As recorded by B. Johnstone in J. Chivers, *Lower Fort Garry, Manitoba* (Ottawa: National Historic Sites Service, n.d.).

23 HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Books, Mactavish to Murray, 6 June 1863, p. 128, B.235/b/11; *also* Mactavish to Murray, 19 June 1863, p. 168, B.235/b/11.

24 Ibid., Mactavish to Davis, 26 June 1863, p. 195; 1 March 1864, p. 595; 2 April 1864, p. 651; 23 March 1864, p. 633, B.235/b/11; HBCA, Journal, 11 October 1868; 10 October 1868; HBCA, Winnipeg: Correspondence Book, Mactavish to Davis, 22 August 1864, p. 1,119; 26 June 1863, p. 195, B.235/b/11.

25 Robert Watson, *Lower Fort Garry, A History of the Stone Fort* (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1928), p. 48.

26 Henry M. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 80-1.

27 HBCA, Journal, October and November 1869, especially 19 October and 8 November.
28 Ibid., 19 January 1874: "four men working in the lath room fixing the engine."
29 Ibid., 19 December 1870; 31 March 1871; 17 April 1871.
30 David Anderson, *Notes of the Flood at Red River, 1852* (London: Hatcher's, n.d.), as quoted in Robert Watson, op. cit., pp. 17-8.
31 HBCA, Accounts, 26 August 1866, p. 144, B.303/d/8.
32 HBCA, Journal, 10 May 1869: "three men putting down a sturgeon net."
33 Ibid., 12 November 1869.
34 Ibid., 10 and 11 February 1869.
35 For example, *see* ibid., 25 February 1869.
36 Ibid., 11 May 1869.

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B.235/c Winnipeg: Correspondence Inward, 1820-1923

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B.303/a Lower Fort Garry: Post Journal, 1868-74

B.303/d Lower Fort Garry: Account Books, 1843-1911

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D.5/1-52 Governor George Simpson Correspondence Inward, 1821-60

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The Big House, Lower Fort Garry

by George Ingram

Abstract

At all major trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, a large house was built to accommodate officers of the Company. The Big House at Lower Fort Garry, an imposing stone structure, served in this and other capacities. Many important visitors shared the warm hospitality within its walls during the fort's ownership by the Company. In 1913, when the fort was leased by the Motor Country Club of Winnipeg, the Big House became a centre of social activity, a role which it played until the early 1960s when Lower Fort Garry was given to Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Introduction

At the major trading establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company, a large house was built to accommodate the Company officers. The residence at Lower Fort Garry was given an extra flourish, for Governor George Simpson himself ordered the fort constructed in 1830. Built of stone, the house was large and substantial in comparison with its equivalent at other posts, and during the early decades, it was fitted up in an elaborate manner.

Over the years the Big House served the Hudson's Bay Company in a number of capacities. It was intended primarily to house the commissioned gentlemen and clerks in charge of the lower fort; and as long as the Hudson's Bay Company continued to conduct business at the fort this remained its most important function. But because of its large size and location away from the mainstream of the settlement, many others found accommodation there. It served as an overflow from the upper fort if no place could be found for all the gentlemen at headquarters. And other important officials in the administration of the settlement were given temporary quarters there. George Simpson preferred its isolation on his frequent visits to the settlement, and his preference set a pattern, for throughout the 19th century the house served as a retreat for senior officers of the Company. In the last quarter of the century, it became a summer home for the chief commissioners (the equivalent of governor) and their families stationed in Winnipeg. A list of occasional visitors or overnighters would be endless. The room held vacant for guests at Hudson's Bay Company posts was the universal symbol of the Company's warm hospitality, and Lower Fort Garry, an important starting point for journeys to the interior or to York Factory and England, got more than its share. Retiring officers or those on leave would stay in the house to await passage, or guests of the Company would find accommodations there while passing through the settlement. The many visitors gave the Big House intimate associations with the early history of the Red River Settlement and of the Canadian West.

When the Hudson's Bay Company closed its sales shop at the lower fort in 1911, the old era ended; in 1913, a new one began. Leased by the Motor Country Club of Winnipeg, the Big House served as a centre of social activity for the next 50 years. The "brandy basket" served in the bar became the symbol of a new and more gracious way of life which drew members and guests to the clubhouse and dining room until the early 1960s when the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development undertook development of the fort and Big House. Now the Big House has been restored to the early 1850s, the high point of its evolution.

In early June, 1830, a small group gathered on the high banks of the Red River about 20 miles down from the forks of the Red and Assiniboine. Governor George Simpson, his young wife Frances, and the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Red River district, Donald McKenzie and Duncan Finlayson, examined the area carefully.[1] Before they parted company that afternoon, the Simpsons and Finlayson continuing their journey to York Factory and McKenzie returning to the forks, they selected the "site of a new establishment." It was "a beautiful spot on a gentle elevation," recorded Frances Simpson, "surrounded by Wood, and commanding a fine view of the river."[2]

There was a definite need for a new establishment. The old Fort Garry at the forks had been badly damaged in the great flood of 1826, and had languished dilapidated since then. The Red River district was gaining significance in the Company's operations and would demand a more substantial administrative centre. Apparently Simpson looked to the higher banks of the lower Red for protection from flooding. He carried the proposal for a new Fort Garry to the meeting of the Northern Council at York Factory, and quite predictably the Council approved.

Construction began on the new fort in the fall when the Simpsons returned to Red River Settlement. The Big House was among the first buildings erected. Pierre Leblanc directed the project, and probably in conjunction with Simpson worked out the plans for the new buildings. Construction moved ahead quickly with the coming of spring, 1831.

At first, Simpson may have looked to the new establishment as his own future base of operations and to the house as his own eventual home. It was his intention when he came with his new bride to the settlement to spend some years in the country and probably at Red River. He may have designed the Big House with this in mind, giving the residence an extra flourish to replace the English comforts which Frances had recently left behind. But he soon tired of Red River society and with his wife's awkward confinement and lingering illness longed to get away to join his friend John George McTavish at Moose Factory. "I am most heartily tired of Red River or rather of its good inhabitants," he wrote McTavish in April, 1831, "and should be delighted to join you at Moose next fall, indeed my better half is constantly entreating me to take her there so that she may enjoy the society of her friend [McTavish's wife] to whom she is most warmly attached."[3]

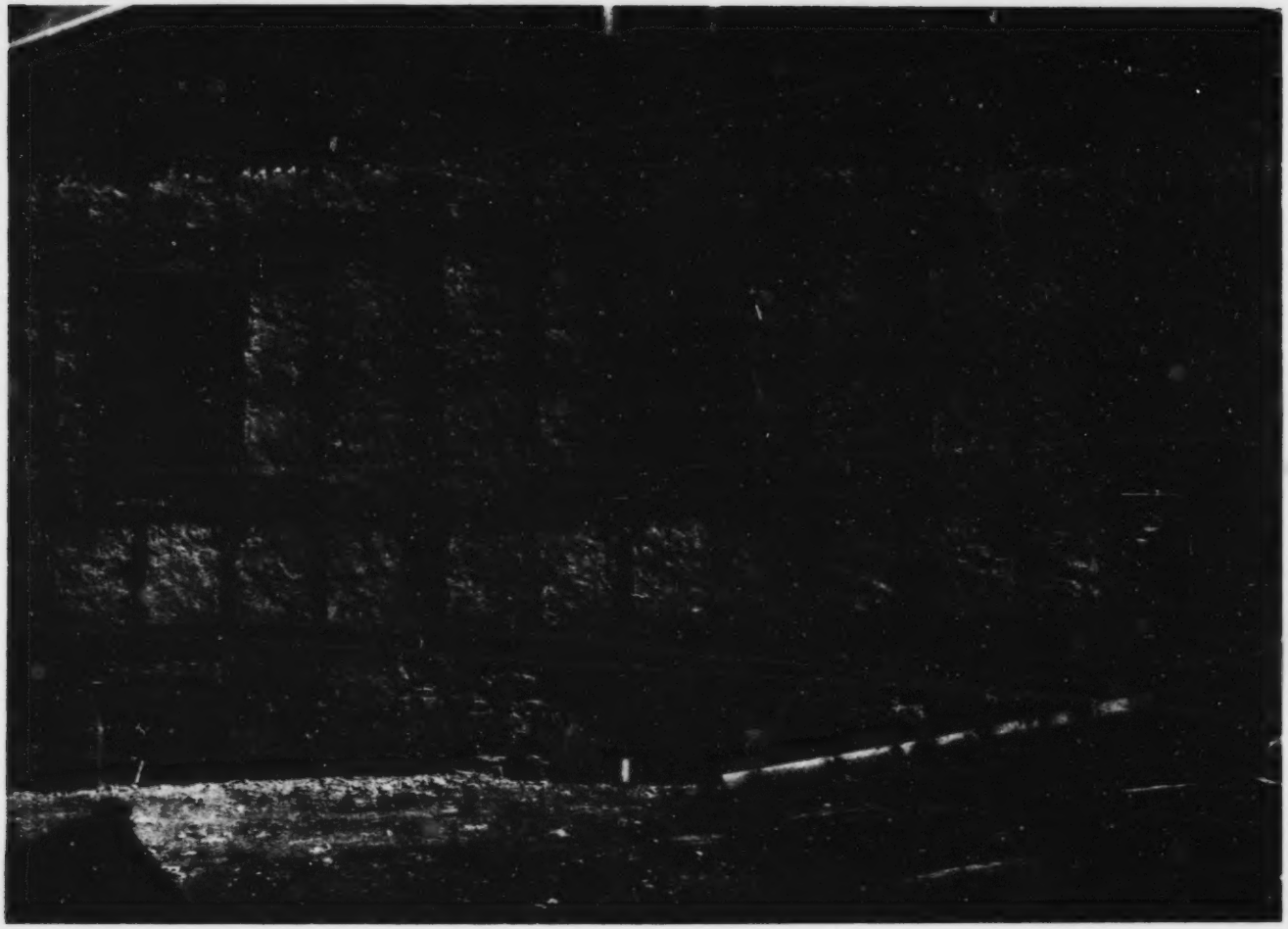
Simpson and his wife, together with their servants, were quartered in a house at the forks which had been renovated by Pierre Leblanc before their arrival in the fall. They planned to move into the residence at the new fort when it was completed – if they were still in the settlement. After their first winter in the Red River Settlement, it was by no means certain they would remain.

We are building at the Rapids, which is the highest & best situation on the River, the materials stone & lime & if the plan I have begun be followed up it will be a respectable & comfortable Establisht. I don't expect to occupy it, as it will not be habitable until the Fall of 1833. – Leblanc conducts the work and the McKenzie River men & recruits of last fall are the labourers. I must pass another winter here & probably two if you cannot make room for me at Moose, but if you can, I should like to join you in the Fall of 1832.[4]

When the next winter proved to be even more of an ordeal than the first and their child, George Geddes, died in the spring, Simpson began to make preparations to take Frances home. They stayed on, however, because of the "gloomy state of things in England."[5] And in the fall the Simpsons moved into the new house at the lower fort. "The new Establishment of Fort Garry is in such a state of forwardness," Simpson reported to the Governor and Committee in the summer of 1832, "that we shall remove into it at the close of the present season."[6]

Although Lower Fort Garry was in a "state of forwardness" it probably lacked much in finished detail, and certainly did not have the many buildings and facilities it would have in the 1860s after three decades of expansion. The defensive walls and bastions of the fort had not been started (these were not constructed until the 1840s). Only the Big House and one or two stores stood clustered on the high banks of the Red. Even the Big House would be far from completed. The spacious veranda which gave it such a marked appearance in the 1850s had not yet been constructed, and inside there was probably a number of small details which still required completion. The grounds around the buildings presented a dreary aspect for like any construction site they were bare of foliage, especially trees, and dotted with piles of construction material. In spite of the construction

1 During restoration, the stucco covering was stripped from the exterior of the annex (ca. 1840-41) revealing the ***colombage pierroté*** construction of the walls. (***National Historic Sites Service.***)



site atmosphere, however, Thomas Simpson could still write that "We are exceedingly well housed here in the new buildings,"[7] when he corresponded with James Hargrave in December.

For the Simpsons the stay at the lower fort could not have been pleasant. Frances, especially, was slow in recovering from the loss of George Geddes, and Simpson's dislike of the society of the settlement continued. There appears to have been some gaiety with fêtes, horse racing on the frozen river, and the Governor and his lady riding in state in their colourful cariole.[8] But any gaiety would only be surface deep. In May, Simpson wrote again to McTavish, reviewing the misfortunes of their stay in Red River and concluding, "In short, I am grieved to say that our House has been a scene of Sorrow & Sickness for nearly 18 months past & I myself am more broken hearted & depressed than I am well able to describe."[9] Later in the month, Simpson was struck with an attack of "blood in the head" and immediately he and Frances began the long journey home. Simpson would return to Red River again but Frances never came farther west than the Canadas in her future stay in the country.[10]

In the fall of 1832, most of the Hudson's Bay Company personnel in the settlement had moved down to the lower fort with the Simpsons. Only a retail shop was maintained at the forks and the lower fort became the administrative centre of the Company in the district. With Simpson present, the affairs of the company hummed. Thomas Simpson (George's cousin and his secretary) complained to James Hargrave in December that "I have been so desperately busy for weeks back and have kept such late hours that I scarcely know at this moment what I am writing."[11]

With Simpson gone in 1833, Chief Factor Alexander Christie was left in charge, presumably stationed at the lower fort. Thomas Simpson remained as clerk, less pressed than he had been before under Governor Simpson. Each summer a part of the Red River establishment including Thomas Simpson went to York Factory to assist in unloading the ships and sending out the brigades. In the fall and winter of 1833-34, however, Thomas Simpson and the other men from Red River were again located at the lower fort and were well housed there. "We are exceedingly comfortable here this season," wrote Simpson to Hargrave, "indeed our worthy Bourgeois kind and estimable nature would make any place so."[12]

But the lower fort was already proving less than ideal for the Company's operations. Simpson had advised the Governor and Committee of its construction only after it was a *fait accompli.* And as Thomas Simpson remarked to his brother, the "Big Wigs" at home were "rather cool on the subject."[13] Alexander Christie as the Governor of Assiniboia was required to travel regularly to the forks to attend to the administrative duties of the colony, and his commuting was bothersome and costly in time. The forks was the natural centre of the settlement and therefore the most logical position for the Company's own headquarters. When Simpson returned for the winter in 1834, he established himself at the forks and seems to have taken most of the Company's personnel with him. Only in the spring did they plan to "resume our quarters at the New Fort."[14]

Simpson's stay at the forks in 1834 augured a permanent move back there of the Company's operations. That fall he selected the site for the rebuilding of the old Fort Garry and as soon as it was completed in 1837, it re-assumed the role of administrative centre for the district. Until then the Red River establishment probably continued to commute between the forks and the new fort. Simpson's elaborate plans for the lower fort were left in abeyance for the time being and for the next 25 years it remained a lesser post which played a role secondary to and in conjunction with the upper fort. A clerk or postmaster was usually placed in charge.

With the slowdown in activity at the lower fort, large parts of the Big House were left vacant and were used to accommodate a variety of people associated directly and indirectly with the Hudson's Bay Company. The clerk, of course, or the person in charge of the fort, continued to have his accommodations in the house, and lesser employees such as the shopkeeper or accountant (if necessary) may also have been given quarters there. But the house had a much larger capacity and parts of it were given over to other occupants.

George Simpson made the house his "own headquarters" when in the settlement and stayed there a number of times in the late 1830s and 1840s. In 1841, for instance, Duncan Finlayson assured him that he would find suitable accommodation in the addition to the house at the

lower fort when Simpson expressed concern about the sagging ceilings in the main house:

We shall, I think, have sufficient for all Comers at either Fort, so that you may hold your Council at whichever you please. You need be under no apprehension on the score of the bellied appearance of the ceiling of the Lower house as you will find better accommodation in the addition, which has been built thereto, last summer, than in the old house.[15]

During the 1840s, the meetings of the Northern Council were held in Red River quite frequently and probably at least in part at the lower fort where Simpson would stay during his visits. This may have been the case in 1841; and similarly in 1845 when Alexander Christie recommended that the various commissioned gentlemen reside at the upper fort and Simpson stay at the lower fort, he suggested that the actual council meeting could take place at either place.

We shall endeavour to enter upon every preparatory outline likewise to get the accommodation at the lower Establishment enlarged and fitted up, in the best possible manner – I perfectly concur in opinion that lower Fort Garry, is the most suitable place for your headquarters, the situation is much more retired and consequently less liable to interruption than here. – but this retirement can only be experienced in the absence of the Several Commissioned Gentlemen as well as all others, who may not have any immediate occupation, and for this reason permit me to recommend, that the several Gentlemen reside here [at Upper Fort Garry] *. . . .the actual meeting of the Northern Department Council could be held at the lower Fort or this place.*[16]

At this time, Simpson was attempting to combine the meetings of the Council of the Northern Department with those of the Council of Assiniboia (the council for the settlement). Christie recommended that the business of the Council of Assiniboia be undertaken at the new court house at the forks and the Northern Council business at either the upper or lower fort. He made a similar suggestion in 1846 when he wrote to Simpson who had apparently just arrived at the lower fort.

I concur with you in opinion that in some aspects the lower Fort, is a more quiet place for the despatch of business than here [upper fort]*; but under existing circumstances, it is evident all the preliminary arrangements in reference to this Settlement, and the Councilling operations of the Season, will be much more readily and satisfactorily completed at this place, and after these are accomplished, and* [sic] *adjournment to the lower fort for closing the business of the season might be necessary; with this impression, I shall send down the Grey horse for your use and our canoe might bring up the luggage.*[17]

And in the fall of 1848, when Simpson appears to have wintered in the settlement, Christie recommended that he establish "his headquarters at Lower Fort Garry, which is in every respect the *most eligible residence.*"[18] In each case the Chief Factor was so insistent that Simpson stay at the lower fort, it would almost seem that he preferred that the governor be somewhat removed from his own operations at the forks.

The meetings of the Northern Council and Simpson came only occasionally to the Big House and therefore a large part of the house remained vacant for most of the year. In 1839 came the first use of the house by occupants outside the Company's immediate service; Adam Thom, the newly appointed Recorder of Rupert's Land, arrived in the fall with his wife and was given rooms in the Big House.[19] He shared the house with John Black, the clerk then in charge of the fort, and of course with Simpson, who landed on the doorstep occasionally. Simpson wrote to Finlayson in 1840:

I am glad to find matters have been satisfactorily adjusted with Mr. Thom in regard to a dwelling, and hope to learn that he was comfortably housed before winter set in. It is probable I may take up my residence principally at the Lower Fort during the sittings of council next spring, or at all events, for two or three days in the week when closely occupied with writing. It may, therefore, be well to have the upper end of the main house cleared and ready for business. If Mr. Thom occupied any part of that end, it will, therefore be necessary that he should vacate that part of the house.[20]

Thom stayed in the house at the lower fort for seven years. His son, Adam Bisset, was born 2 August 1843, probably in the Big House. In 1846, when the Sixth Regiment of Foot was brought to the Red River Settlement, Thom was asked to leave so the military officers could be accommodated at the lower

ort. This he did, not very graciously, and ook up quarters a short way from the ort.[21] In 1847, he purchased the home f Chief Factor Charles where he re- nained until he left the settlement in 854. He left in disgrace. The Company greed to buy his home and provided his ness at the lower fort while he awaited passage to York Factory and England.

Mr. Thom on quitting his own house will proceed to the Lower Fort where he is to be allowed the use of that portion of the house he formerly occupied with the necessary furniture, until the 1 August following. Mr. & Mrs. Thom & their son are to be maintained by the Company at the mess of the establishment during the two months they remain at the Lower Fort.[22]

In 1846, a detachment of the Sixth Regiment of Foot was sent to the Red River Settlement at the request of the Hudson's Bay Company.[1] Although the troops were officially despatched to defend British claims to the interior, the Hudson's Bay Company wanted the force to keep peace in the settlement. The regiment came only after protracted negotiations and the assurance of the Hudson's Bay Company that it could supply proper accommodation. The Company offered the upper and lower forts, described in glowing terms, until better accommodations could be provided. It was planned to construct more permanent and regular fortifications after the troops arrived in the settlement.

At the lower fort, the Company's operations were removed from the fort to the buildings at the creek to the south. The Big House was offered for the accommodation of the officers and described as a "dwelling house containing about 20 rooms of various sizes on the basement and first storey where the officers might be quartered."[2] The others were quartered in the storehouses which were converted into barracks. In advance of the regulars, two officers of the Royal Engineers with assistants were sent out to place the defences of the two forts in order and to prepare for the occupancy of the troops. They arrived in July and made their headquarters at the lower fort. Lieutenant (later Captain) Hampden Moody took over Adam Thom's quarters in the Big House.

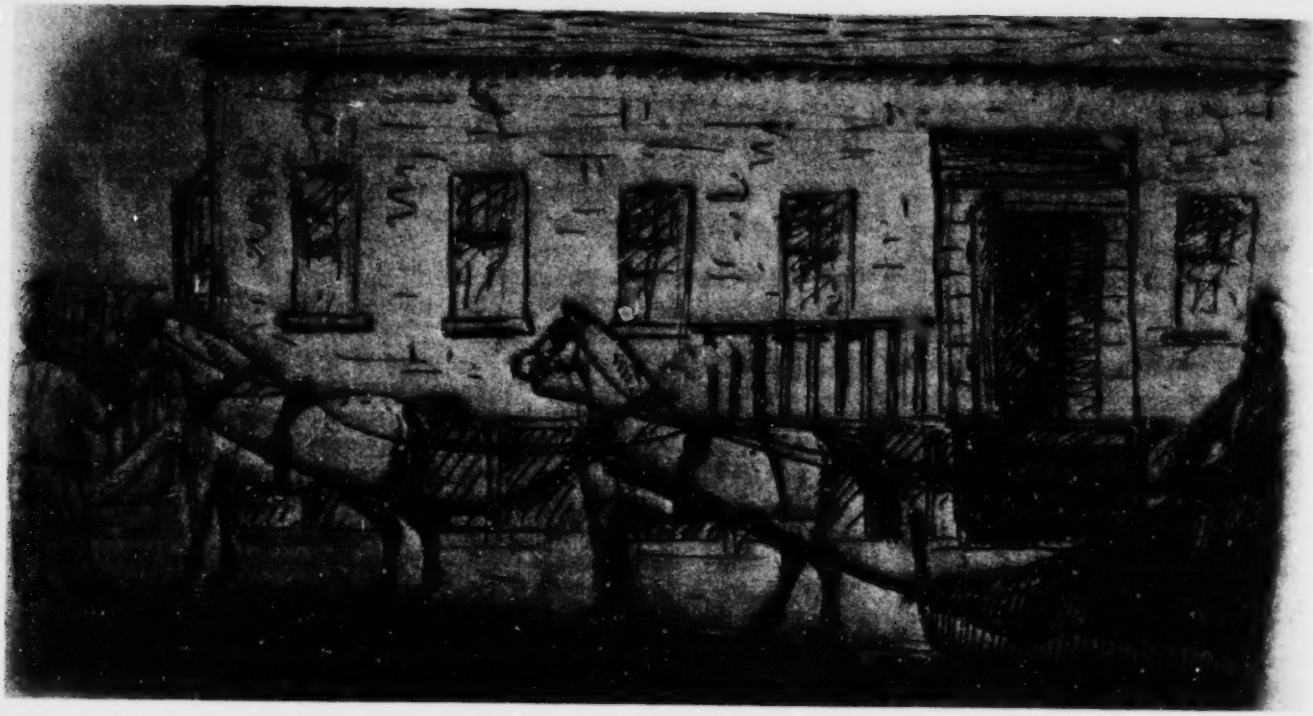
The troops remained for two years, leaving in September, 1848. Although a great boon for the economy and society of the settlement, they were not particularly happy there. Crofton (the officer in command of the unit) complained from the moment he arrived at York Factory and left before his tour of duty was finished. The officers and men were also dissatisfied; there were desertions before the first year was over.

I assure You [wrote Christie to Simpson] *nothing has been wanting on our part in contributing towards the comfort of both officers and men so far as our means could possibly admit;. . . there is nevertheless an apparent dissatisfaction amongst the officers and men regarding* the country.[3]

There was, however, some social activity, and the lower fort seems to have had the livelier of the two garrisons. Hampden Moody writing to Sir George a few months after the arrival of the troops noted that "The Lower Fort is the sporting one & the head quarter men come out to us to see the fun."[4]

When the troops left in September, 1848, the Hudson's Bay Company re-occupied the buildings within the fort. That year John Black, William Lane and Bannatyne wintered at the fort, and probably in the house.[5] Simpson may have spent the winter there.

2 When the Big House was occupied by the officers of the Sixth Regiment (1846-48), the wide veranda had not yet been constructed. The broken balustrade was probably indicative of rough usage by the troops. (*Public Archives of Canada.*)



In 1849, the Big House was made ready for the occupancy of the Reverend David Anderson, consecrated bishop of the newly established diocese of Rupert's Land, 29 May 1849. Simpson gave explicit instructions to Chief Factor John Ballenden, pointing out the elaborate alterations necessary to make the house suitable for his occupancy. The wing (annex) was retained for the use of the Company, being then occupied by John Black, the clerk in charge of the fort. The rest of the house, blocked off from the wing, would be divided into two sections for the use of the bishop and his chaplain.

You will make over to the Bishop, the principal house at the Lower Fort, with the exception of the wing which it is advisable to retain for our own accommodation, it being in the meantime occupied by Mr. Black. The communication between the wing and the main house must be walled up, thereby making two entirely distinct houses, with separate entrances. The mess room you will please divide into two, and in appropriating the accommodation, the Bishop should be put in possession of all that part formerly occupied during the Sitting of the Councils with the front entrance, Consisting of 6 rooms together with Kitchen, Servants rooms, cellars &c. his Lordship's Chaplain can occupy that portion of the House formerly inhabited by Mr. Thom, with a separate entrance, consisting of four rooms besides Kitchen, Servants rooms and cellars. The requisite alterations and repairs should be entered upon without delay and the residence put in order for the reception of the Bishop and his suite immediately on arrival at the Settlement.[1]

Simpson's orders were carried out immediately and by July, the house, with the exception of the furnishings, was ready for the occupancy of the bishop.

Agreeably to Your instructions when here, the large dwelling house at this place, has been completely arranged, for the accommodation of Bishop Anderson and his Chaplain, but the furniture of the several rooms, is far from what they have been accustomed to, the deficiency may however, be afterwards prepared and completed under their own direction.[2]

Bishop Anderson, a widower, and his three sons under the care of the bishop's unmarried sister, sailed from England on the Hudson's Bay Company supply ship, *Prince Rupert*. They were accompanied by the bishop's chaplain, Mr. Chapman and his wife, and the Reverend R. Hunt, a Church Missionary Society missionary and his wife. The party arrived at York Factory on 16 August.[3] Ten days later it set off for Red River, reaching there on 3 October. The bishop immediately moved into the Big House with which he was quite pleased.

Since I last wrote you matters in the Colony have gone on very quietly. The Bishop and party arrived on the 3rd of October & immediately took possession of and seemed to be well pleased with their residence at the lower Fort. He had with him one clergyman and a reader both with wives, and I was therefore under the necessity of allowing one of them to take possession of the little house occupied by Mr. Christie last year.[4]

The bishop's stay in the Big House was very short. Just as he was "entering the river" in October, Mr. (John) Macallum, the master of the boys' school in the Red River Settlement, died, leaving the school without management. The bishop agreed to purchase the school and moved there sometime in December.[5] Mr. Chapman, who was appointed to the Middle Church in December, probably moved out of the Big House at the same time.[6] Mr. and Mrs. Hunt remained at the lower fort during the winter and spring until 6 June, when Hunt left for his new charge in the English River district.[7]

After the bishop moved from the house, "no further occupant" was to be allowed to take up quarters there until Simpson specified. Black, of course, continued to occupy the annex or some other portion of the house.

During the following year, Simpson completed negotiations for the appointment of Eden Colvile[1] as the associate governor in Rupert's Land. Simpson planned to travel less frequently and, if possible, to move to England. Colvile would be stationed in the Red River district, a trouble spot in the Company's operations; would preside over meetings of the Northern Council, and would be responsible for the administration of the Northern Department.

Colvile arrived in the settlement with his wife in August, 1850, and settled in the Big House at the lower fort. He shared the main house with Augustus Edward Pelly, the accountant, and his wife, and probably with W. D. Lane, a postmaster (later clerk). George Davis (listed as an interpreter for outfit 1855) may have lived in the house or possibly in one of the other buildings at the fort. Soon after he arrived, Colvile decided "to send Pelly to the Upper Fort to take charge of the accounts and retain young Lane, who seems a swaggering sort of chap, here."[2] In the following week, John Ballenden moved into Pelly's quarters with his wife.[3]

Mrs. Ballenden had recently been the central figure in a libel suit against the Pellys. Captain Christopher Foss, an officer with the Chelsea Pensioners stationed in the settlement, had been seen frequently with her and this had started tongues wagging. Eventually the gentlemen of the Company's establishment in the Red River district and their ladies were taking sides on the issue of Mrs. Ballenden's virtue. In May, the Pellys and others withdrew from the Company mess over which Mrs. Ballenden presided, and in June, Foss posted notice of his intention to take Pelly to court, accusing him of defamation. The case was tried in July, and after the intervention of Adam Thom, the court found against the Pellys who were ordered to pay Foss £200. In August, with the scandal still very much an issue, Mrs. Ballenden was whisked away to the lower fort by her husband. Chief Factor Ballenden departed almost immediately for England.

In the Big House, Mrs. Ballenden renewed her affair with Foss. Her indiscretion revealed her guilt in the first instance beyond a doubt. Colvile immediately related the latest gossip of the scandal to Simpson.

Mrs. Ballenden having at last beyond the possibility of doubt shewn herself in her true colours; Pelly has made up his mind to despatch an express to St. Peters on his own account to let all the world know it, and I will take the opportunity of writing you a few lines. Just as the regular winter packet was departing, about a month ago, Adam Thom with much caution placed in my hands a copy of a letter written by Mrs. Ballenden, to Foss commencing, "My own darling Christopher", and requesting him, as I was to be absent at the Court, to come down and pay her a visit; he was to leave after dark, & she would have a hot supper awaiting him which she hoped he would enjoy, & so forth. The original having been delivered, the said darling Christopher came down & remained closeted in her rooms for two days and nights, but they managed matters so well, that to this hour, though it was of course known that Foss was absent from his own quarters, no one but Thom, myself, and the deliverer of the letter, whose name I cannot even tell you, have been able to prove that he was here. This put me in rather an unpleasant position, as of course I had to put a stop to all association with her, and at the same time was precluded from giving my reason for so doing. However she very soon extricated me from this dilemma, by one fine afternoon driving up to Foss's quarters, and, I believe, passing the night there. This was, with the usual rapidity of scandal at Red River, forthwith made public. She is still residing here, but is, I understand, going to take her departure immediately, at which I shall be very glad.[4]

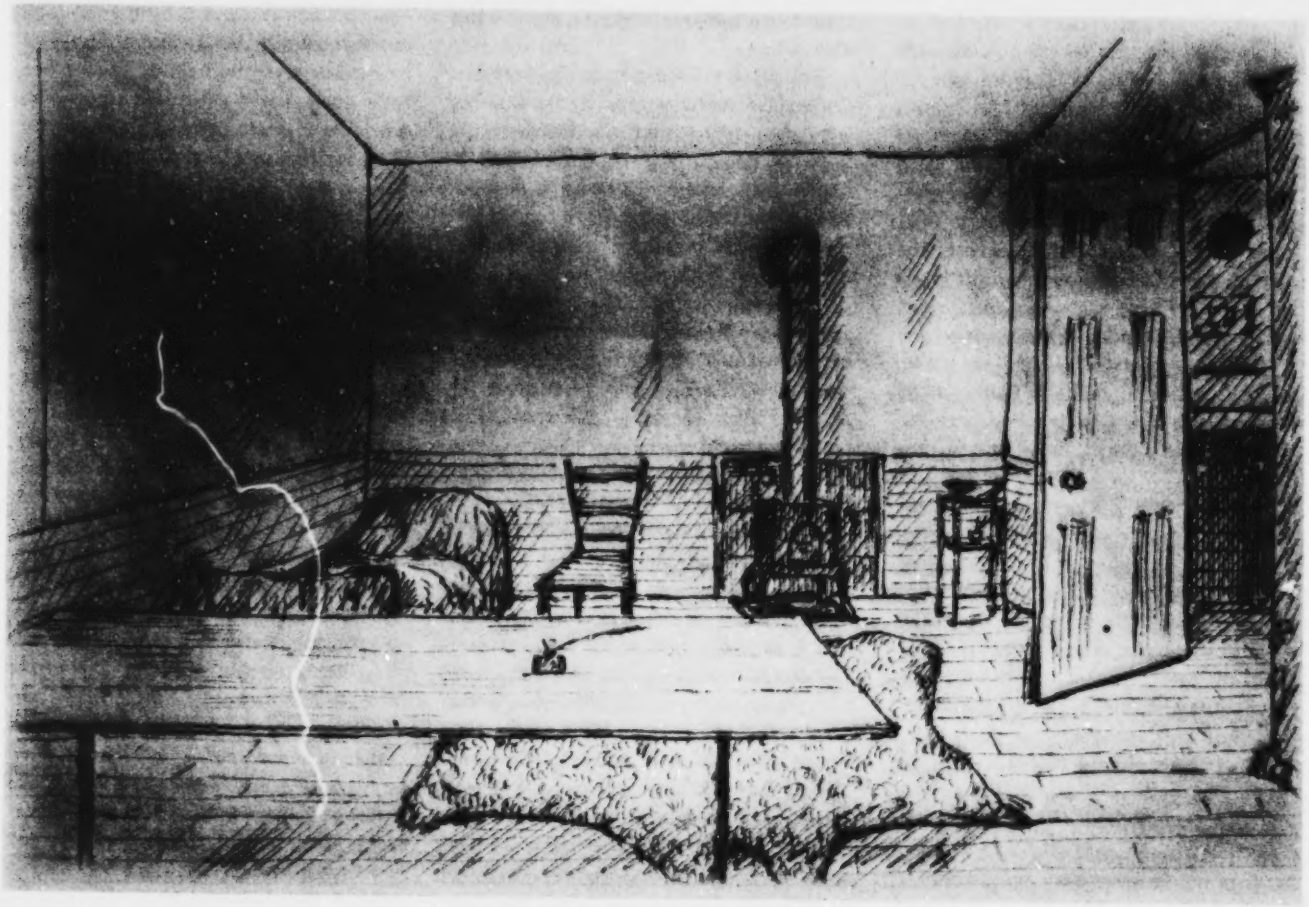
As expected, Mrs. Ballenden soon departed. "Mrs. Ballenden left the Fort, of her own accord, on the 11th January," Colvile reported to Simpson, "and is living at the house of one Cunninghame about a couple of miles from Foss' quarters."[5]

The remainder of Colvile's stay was rather less eventful. Colvile lived in the house with his servants, Mr. and Mrs. Deans, and perhaps with W. D. Lane of whom he had a very good report.

I have been very much pleased with the conduct of young Lane this winter. He is very active, zealous and obliging, popular with the customers at the shop & gets on well with the men. He is very steady in his conduct, and correct in his accounts, and I hope you will not think me wrong in recommending to the Council that at the expiration of his present contract, he be placed on the footing of a clerk on his third contract. He writes a very good hand & copies correctly though rather slowly. His fault is, perhaps, having a little too good an opinion of himself, though it is a failing more amusing than offensive.[6]

Quite probably Colvile entertained fre-

3 The interior of a room, possibly of the Big House, as sketched by George Finlay in 1847. (*Glenbow Foundation.*)



quently, providing a social centre for the settlement, and during his sojourn, the house and grounds took on a gracious air. Bishop Anderson on one of his visits to the fort noted in his diary, "Here we found a changed scene. The Fort has been improved with much taste by Governor and Mrs. Colvile and it began to wear much more of an English aspect; the annuals were above ground, and the lawns smooth and green."[7] The veranda appears to have been added at this time and probably many other fine features shown in the Hime photograph of 1858 could be attributed to Mrs. Colvile's fine taste and her husband's high position in the Company.

In May, 1852, a short time before his departure from the settlement, Colvile played host to refugees from the upper settlement. A flood, mere inches short of the record of 1826, inundated the entire area of the forks. The family of Major Caldwell (in command of the Chelsea Pensioners) and Mrs. Mills, the matron of the local girls' school, were invited by Colvile to wait out the high waters in the Big House.

The old Major [Caldwell], *as usual, has done nothing. He sent all his family and servants down here; they are lodged at the lower end of this house, living of course at their own expense, but he said, he would not desert his post, & has remained all along in the big house up above, where he has, of course, had nothing to do. I have invited Mrs. Mills and her daughter to stay with us, till she is able to return to her establishment, and the girls at her school, are dispersed through the settlement.*[8]

By the end of the month of May, the waters were falling and his guests were able to leave.

Following the meeting of the Northern Council at Norway House, the Colviles left the Red River Settlement for England. W. D. Lane remained in charge of the lower fort and apparently was the sole permanent occupant of the Big House. He had a number of visitors, and at least one large dinner party in 1854 which he reported in detail to his mother. Like most parents, Lane's mother chided him repeatedly for not writing home frequently. Lane finally sat down in August, 1854, to give a full account of his daily activities.

Well to begin I get up every morning about five o'clock when the Fort Bell rings the men to work, from that time till breakfast (which is at half past seven) is generally occupied in pointing out to the men their various duties for the day/after this is settled I frequently take my gun and wander out in the vast plains to shoot pheasants, pigeons and ducks. . . When breakfast is over I go into my office where I find ample to keep me employed throughout the day paying out & receiving money, cashing bills and orders, receiving furs from Indians and paying them for the same &c&c&c. We also have a large sale shop here which gives me a good deal of employment, our prompt sales. . .amount to never less, than £400 a month and sometimes a great deal more. . . . On Sundays of course I attend church very regularly. . . . When the labours of the week days are over I frequently go and take tea at the parsonage at St. Andrews. . . . I am here all alone, I mean to say I have no mess mates residing with me and am therefore obliged to take my meals by myself which is very solitary work but I frequently have visiters. . .only think I had a very large party but a few days ago. we sat down to dinner about twenty in number. . . .I am sure you will feel somewat at a loss to know how a bachelor in my circumstances could set up a dinner for such a lot of big wigs, the fact is they got it in a plain homely way/ first of all there was a substantial roast of beef, a regular cut, & come again affair, a boiled leg of mutton smothered in caper sauce, boiled fowls and ham, potatoes, pease, broad beans & all the luxuries my garden could produce/ second course, plum pudding, rhubarb, strawberry and raspberry tarts to the mast head, then came the cheese, but when it came to desert I was what you may call fairly fixed, having nothing but melons to give them so by way of a joke I got a large dish of thundering big raw turnips and had them placed at the other end of the table — I of course attributed this misdeameanor to the ignorance of my storekeeper — I have got an old Indian for a cook and a capital cook the fellow is. His name is Egga-na-a-pa-tum but finding it much easier to pronounce I always call him "catch him and eat him."[9]

Lane may have shared the house with George Davis who remained at the lower fort after Colvile's departure. And in December, 1854, John Ballenden (now separated from his wife) made plans to move down with his family for a stay in the house, perhaps over the Christmas season. He sent down his harp and piano in advance.

Under charge of Bon homme Mr. Ballenden now sends down the Harp &

piano &c. as he intends to reside some time at the Lower Fort. Will you please be so kind as to see that they are not hurt in any way, and stand them in the little parlour, with open fire place. Please send me a note by bearer saying how they got down. Mr. B- would be glad if you could succeed in getting Sinclair to tune the piano this week. He has requested me to inform you that he will be down on Monday or Tuesday next with the two Miss's Ballenden & your humble servant-kitt & all. You will have quite an Establishment when we are there & I expect to have a jolly time of it.[10]

By February, the Ballendens had returned to the forks and the chief factor was making plans to have his maid servant Catharine Birston married to George Davis at the lower fort. He left the "arranging of the affair" entirely to Lane.

Catharine is to be married on thursday next the 15 current & I have decided on making a wedding for her at the Lower Fort. I must therefore again trouble you to get a dinner & supper prepared for them, also a good supply of grog. They have both been good servants of the Company. It will be rather expensive but we must give the party both meat & drink & take care we give sufficient. My daughter will bring down cakes for the party. We will attempt nothing fine, only let there be plenty to eat & drink, you may expect about a hundred people of all sizes, so you may calculate upon that number at the lowest. I trust the arranging of the affair entirely to yourself. . . . Annie & Eliza talk of going down & they will be accompanied by the Misses Ross — also Messrs. Logan, Taylor & Fortescue — Retain my room & the bed room alongside for the ladies & the gentlemen will pack any place.[11]

Like an old mother hen, Ballenden kept close daily tabs on Lane's handling of the affair. It appears that Lane planned to accommodate the young married couple in the Big House after their wedding, at least until spring.

I received yesterday your note of the previous day — George Davis came up & I believe has settled all, his young bride goes down today. Your plan of lodging them is the best & we shall require no alteration in the establishment before early in the spring. Let nothing be neglected on our part to make them comfortable & happy, and see that everything goes on orderly & quietly — I don't wish my daughters to remain too late nor yet to leave too early. If you wish to give them a hint when to leave, speak to Margaret. Messrs. Logan, Taylor & Fortescue will come down on Thursday.[12]

The night before the wedding, Ballenden sent down a few more "articles" requested by Lane.

I duly received your letters of the 12th instant & I lose not time in forwarding the articles you requested, for the Lower Fort. there are some you ask, of which we have no supply — I forward this evening 3 table cloths which I hope you will return as soon as convenient. . . . I trust to hear that tomorrow will be a pleasant evening & for my sake I hope there will be no hub-bub.[13]

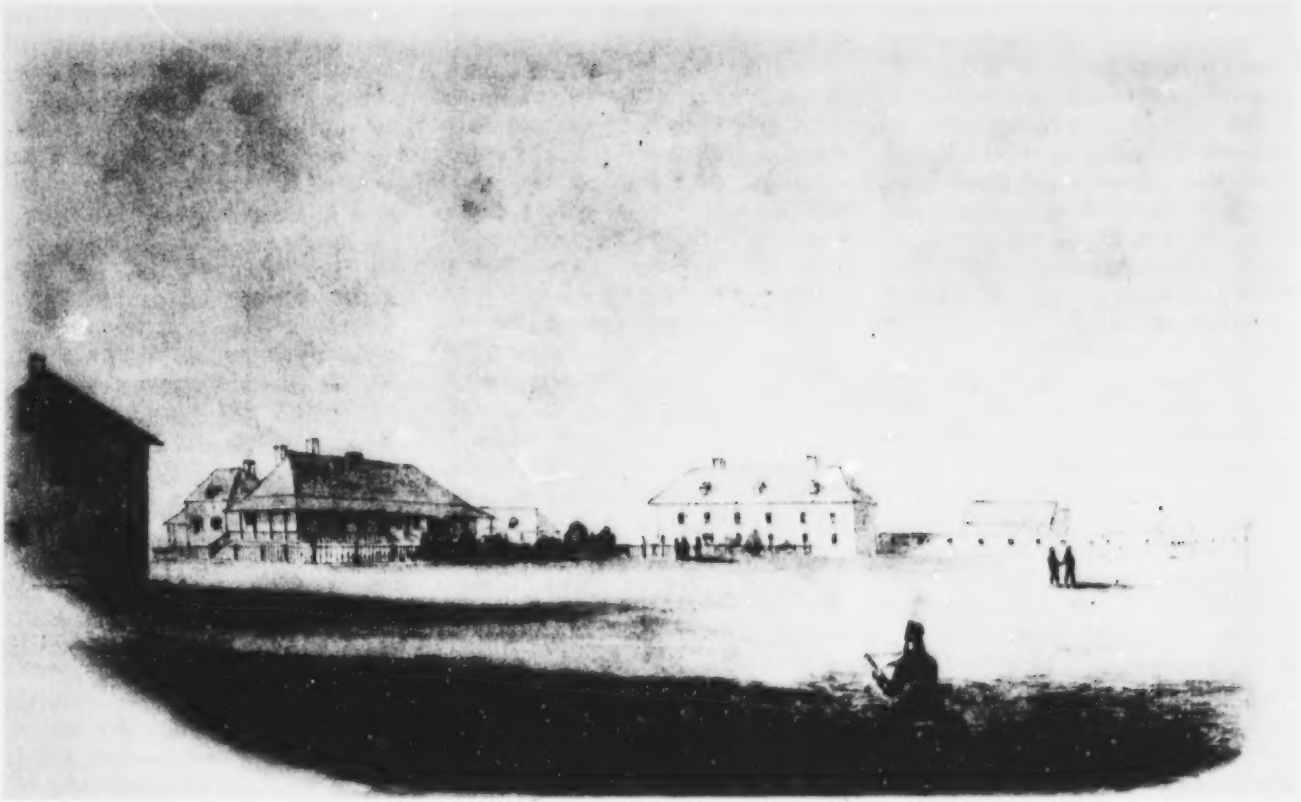
With a great sigh of relief Ballenden received Lane's message that everything had gone "smoothly." Remembering his own experience he had been afraid of something "occurring."

Your note of yesterday relieved me of much anxiety. I felt when my daughters went down that I was running great risk for fear of anything occurring while they were at the Lower Fort, but I am glad to learn that all went on smoothly. In other respects, I felt no anxiety as I was confident, that they were safe when under the special protection of the gentlemen of the fort. All is over now & I am glad the young people made themselves happy in their own fashion.[14]

With the exception of Lane's dinner parties and Catharine Birston's wedding, the lower fort appears to have been a quiet place. And there was a considerable amount of room unused in the house which was kept open for the occasional visitor or occupant.[15] In June, Simpson suggested that Ballenden, who had been replaced in the Red River district by Chief Factor Swanston, should move down to the lower fort until he left for his new posting in the Columbia district.[16]

At the end of June, Simpson replaced W. D. Lane at the lower fort with Dr. Cowan.[17] The actual change took place early in July with Lane moving to the post at the White Horse Plain where he remained for a number of years. Dr. Cowan and his family moved into the house at the lower fort.

4 Pictured in its setting by J. Fleming in 1857, the Big House emitted a gracious air. (*John Ross Robertson Collection, Metropolitan Toronto Central Library.*)



In the late 1850s, the lower fort reached a high point in its development. In 1858, the Hudson's Bay Company commenced farming operations under the direction of A. R. Lillie and at the same time extensive stables were added to house the oxen used in the cart transportation of the Company. Later the steamboats of the Hudson's Bay Company used the lower fort as a base of operations. A number of activities associated with the supply and trade of the fur trade sprang up in the area around the fort. In short, Lower Fort Garry began to show the promise indicated by Simpson when he had established it in the 1830s.

With the increased activity at the fort, the Big House was used more as a residence for the fort staff and less as a guest home for favoured itinerants. Of course room was found for the occasional visitor but large blocks were not set aside for those not directly involved in the day-to-day activity at the fort. The house itself was beginning to suffer from the passage of time. In 1862, when the new governor of the Company, A. G. Dallas, arrived in the settlement, Chief Factor Mactavish suggested that he would be better accommodated at the upper rather than the lower fort.

I think that more comfortable accommodation for Governor Dallas & his family can be provided here than at the Lower Fort, and I will therefore provide for him here but should he think other ways after his arrival he can easily make the change.[1]

Life at the lower fort, like that at other Hudson's Bay Company establishments, was lively and boisterous. The employees of the Company worked long and hard hours and played equally long and hard. The Big House served as the centre for social activity. Roderick Campbell, who arrived at the fort in 1859, a highly impressionable boy of seventeen, left this account of the active social life:

The residents in the fort formed a very lively community by themselves. They had regular hours for the dispatch of business, and afterwards, to beguile the tedium of the long sub-Arctic nights, they met together for a few hours' jollification, when old Scottish songs were sung in voices cracked and sharpened by the cold northern blasts. Materially assisted by French Cognac, Scotch whisky and Old Jamaica, the fun was kept up merrily till some slipped down and retired into a long and peaceful slumber. At these carousals a pint of liquor per head was the allowance; and I, a boy of seventeen, was included among the "heads." Many a prayer I uttered, fighting against a temptation almost beyond human power to resist, so far from home, so young, and so alone.[2]

In a few years, with the sale of the Company to the International Financial Society, the years of the hard-bitten, rollicking fur trader were over. Scenes such as those described by Campbell at the lower fort became the exception.

Although beginning to show its age, the Big House retained the gracious air which it had assumed during the stay of the Colviles in the early 1850s. Samuel Scudder, who stayed in the house in 1860 on his way to observe the eclipse, was very much taken with the house and grounds:

The buildings at the lower fort are somewhat older [than those of the upper fort]; *the one we occupied during our stay there, the residence of the officials, being a stately old mansion with wide verandas, lofty ceilings, heavy, old fashioned furniture, with plenty of brass, even to swinging knobs on the doors, plastered walls painted green, floors bare of every thing but skins, and open fireplaces in every room. The stone wall of the fort itself is about twenty years old, three or four feet thick, pierced for small arms, and enclosing four or more acres.*[3]

H.M. Robinson, more familiar with the building, could speak of its almost incongruous beauty in a fur trading post.

Entering through the huge gateway pierced in the centre of the east wall, facing the river, the first view is of the residence of the chief trader in command, and also of the clerks and upper class of employés under his charge. It is a long two-story stone building, with a broad piazza encircling it on three sides. A square plot of green sward surrounding it is fenced in with neat railing, and kept in extremely good order. A broad gravel walk leads from the gateway to the piazza. Huge shade trees border it, and beds of waving and fragrant flowers load the business air with their perfume. In this building the mess of the chief and his subordinates is held. Its hospitalities are extended in good old English style. A room is set apart for the use of the transient guest who is free to come and go as he lists.[4]

In September, 1868, William Flett arrived with his family to take charge of the Company's operations at the lower fort. Flett presided over the gradual decline of the fort in the following 15 years. The coming of the railway, changes in Company policy, and the decline of the fur trade all conspired to lessen the importance of Lower Fort Garry. But, although the importance of the post declined, the Big House continued to serve as a useful residence, receiving more visitors in the rooms left vacant by the declining role of the fort.

The peaceful daily routine of the lower fort and settlement was disrupted with the outbreak of the troubles of 1869.[1] Lower Fort Garry, located on the fringe, was relatively free from direct involvement; but its very isolation gave the fort an indirect role. Stoughton Dennis attempted unsuccessfully to rally loyal settlers there during the first ten days of December, and no doubt stayed in the Big House during his attempt. And in February when Donald Smith, then Dominion Commissioner, and Archbishop McLean came down to the lower fort "to consult with influential parties" they were allegedly visited by Riel in the Big House.[2]

In 1870, when Colonel Garnet Wolseley arrived with troops he stopped first at the lower fort and then continued up the river to occupy Upper Fort Garry. That winter the lower fort was garrisoned with a detachment of Quebec Rifles. The officers were accommodated in the attic of the Big House where bedrooms were created and new windows cut into the roof. The presence of troops introduced new vigour into the social life and the journal of the lower fort makes note of the attendance of clergymen from the upper settlement. In September, the Lieutenant-Governor held a levee which "a great many of the volunteer officers and most respectable of the settlers and clergy were invited to attend."[3]

With order restored, the lower fort and Big House settled down to a quiet routine of business, interrupted only occasionally by a special event or unusual visitors.[4] In July and the first part of August, an official government party arrived at the fort to negotiate a treaty with the Indians.

Gov. Archibald and his family with the Indian Commissioner W. Simpson, Esquire, Provincial Secretary Howard arrived here this evening preparatory to the negotiations that has been appointed to take place with the Indian tribes of the province tomorrow.[5]

The protracted negotiations dragged on until 6 August, and during its stay, the official party was probably given quarters in the Big House. An illustration of the meeting shows the government negotiator on the porch of the Big House with the Indians assembled on the lawn below.

Commissioner Donald Smith, like his predecessors, was also a frequent visitor to the fort. In September, 1871, he held a council at the lower fort and reported the results of his trip to England to the anxious officers of the Company:

All the commissioned gentlemen, who are in the settlement were called here by Mr. Smith (namely Chief Factors, W. J. Christie, R. Hamilton, Wm. McMurray, and I. G. Stewart with Chief Traders — Wm. Watt, J. Hackland, A. McDonald and Thomas Taylor) to hear Mr. Smith's report from England and after Mr. Smith had an interview with the Gentlemen, he went up with Mr. J. H. McTavish to the Upper Fort.[6]

Smith spent a few months and perhaps the whole winter (1871-72) at the lower Fort.[7] Like J. G. McTavish who came down to the fort "to write his letters"[8] in December, 1872, he may have wished to get away from the hectic life at the upper fort.

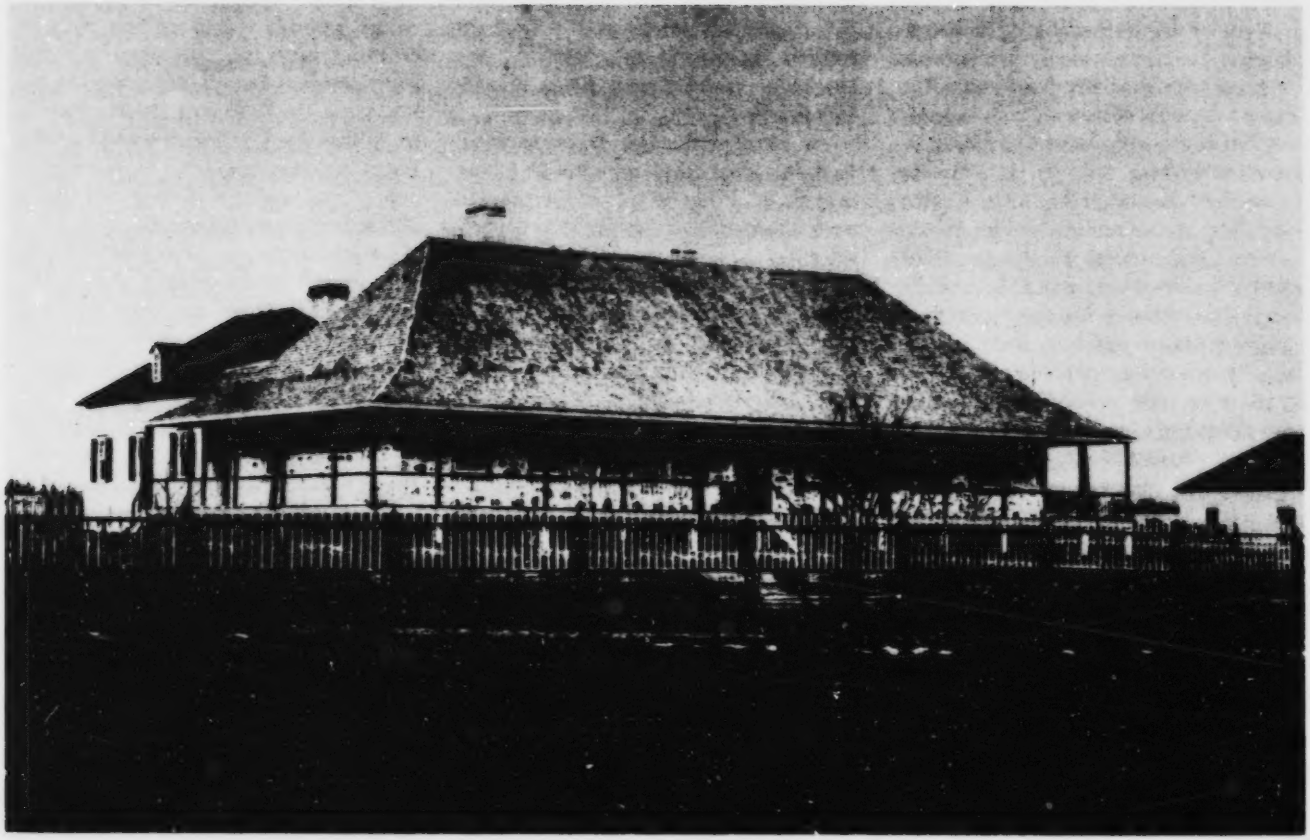
In 1873, the house again served as an officers' quarters when the newly formed Mounted Police were stationed at the lower fort for a training period. They were given the attic rooms used by the Quebec Rifles and complained strongly about them:

The barracks accommodation for the men is very good, the officers quarters are about as bad as they well could be, being merely the attics of the quarters occupied by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company and divided from each other by wooden partitions which do not reach the ceilings.[9]

Perhaps the austere, uncomfortable quarters were partially overcome by the active social life. Soon after they arrived, a group of Company officials from the upper settlement came down and "had a dance;"[10] probably one of several social events which took place in the Big House.

With the departure of the Mounted Police in 1874, the Big House was again left with vacant space. In the fall, inspecting Chief Factor Robert Hamilton moved in with his family after making elaborate changes in the house. His stay there precipitated a wrangle with Commissioner James A. Grahame which ended finally with Hamilton's resignation. In the spring

5 At the height of its existence, the Big House was photographed in 1858 by H. L. Hime of the Hind Expedition. (***Public Archives of Canada.***)



of 1875, Hamilton was sent to Edmonton, and when it was learned that Chief Factor Hardisty planned to resign, Hamilton was designated to take his place. Hamilton wanted to leave his family at the lower fort where they had been settled at considerable expense, and to go alone to Edmonton. Grahame was insistent that his family should move with him instead of remaining a charge on the Red River district. In July, Hamilton submitted his resignation. The wrangling continued, however, when Hamilton sent a long letter to Grahame outlining the history of the difficulties.

You considered my case an exceptional one, and I have a perfect recollection of thanking you for the same, feeling assured as I believe you did also, that the Board would have no objections to my family remaining for a short time in the quarters which had already cost me a good deal of money to make comfortable for them [They each have a different interpretation of the Board's decision but Hamilton must take Grahame's interpretation as standing.]. . . *no matter how arbitrary I may consider it, remembering as I do the conversation which led to this matter being spoken of, when you expressed the intention of making use of the quarters now occupied by my family as a summer residence for your own family.* [Grahame's comment in the margin concerning Hamilton's statement is "a transient remark in case of sickness at Fort Garry."][11]

Hamilton's family remained in the house over the next winter when they were unable to make alternate arrangements. The whole incident was given tragic overtones when Hamilton's youngest child died at Lower Fort Garry in the spring "from the accidental upsetting of a cup of carbolic acid on its chest."[12] The Hamiltons vacated the house shortly thereafter.

As soon as the Hamiltons departed, Grahame prepared to make the Big House over to G. S. McTavish, who appears to have been Robert Hamilton's replacement.

You are required in this Department and . . . you will please report yourself here. Like myself you must expect to be constantly on the move but your family will be furnished with quarters at Lower Fort Garry and it is for you to decide whether you will bring them here now or leave them below until spring.[13]

The offer of the house to McTavish indicated that the feud between Grahame and Hamilton was as much a personal matter as one of Company policy. McTavish did not take up the offer of the house.

In August, 1877, when Lord Dufferin passed through the lower fort with an official party on his way to the Saskatchewan, he probably stayed in the Big House. On 13 August, Grahame wrote to William Flett, still in charge of Lower Fort Garry, informing him of the possible visit of the Governor General and telling him to prepare for his arrival.

As it is possible that Lord Dufferin may visit your post in passing during the current week I have to request that you will try and have all about in good order and extend any hospitality in your power to himself and party. I must leave the details to your own good judgement – of course you should hoist the H.B.C. red flag but do not have any firing.[1]

Much to Flett's surprise, the Governor General and his party not only visited the fort but also spent two nights as his guest. All went well, and Flett reported to Grahame in a rather testy letter:

And I have to say that although I have [sic] *no certain information either official or otherwise that Lord Dufferin and party intended to pass two nights here yet I think we got over the difficulty pretty well and apparently they were quite satisfied with the accommodation and reception they got. Their cook and waiter came down here from the rapids with their travelling kitchen about an hour before Lord Dufferin arrived and that was the first certain information we had when they handed me the Honourable D. A. Smith's note.*[2]

After its short stay, the viceregal party boarded the Company steamboat, *Colvile*, for its trip across Lake Winnipeg. On his return, Lord Dufferin was again accommodated at the lower fort.[3]

In 1879, Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame took over part of the house and moved his family there for the summer (giving substance to Robert Hamilton's charge that Grahame was planning this as early as 1875). His family came from Montreal in the spring and remained until September. In 1880, he did the same after ordering extensive renovations. In taking up quarters in the Big House for the summer months, Grahame set a trend which was followed by later commissioners. Their official home was situated in Winnipeg, but the house, constructed in the last years of Grahame's period as commissioner, was uncomfortable and a cause of constant complaint. The Big House provided a gracious retreat at least for part of the year.

Grahame's successor, Joseph Wrigley, took an equal interest in the lower fort and the Big House.[1] Soon after he became trade commissioner in 1884, he inspected the fort in connection with an offer by the provincial government to buy the buildings and land. He recommended that the Company retain the fort and probably began to use the house soon afterward. There is record of his being there in the summers of 1888, 1889 and 1890. Wrigley and Grahame probably used much the same area (the main house) as C.C. Chipman and his family later occupied. The annex and possibly the adjacent room in the Big House were inhabited by the clerk or officer in charge of the fort.[2]

Clarence Campbell Chipman, who assumed the duties of trade commissioner after Wrigley, took an even greater interest in the fort and made the most extensive use of the house.[3] His interest prolonged the life of the lower fort as a Hudson's Bay Company post, for as long as he maintained his summer residence there, Chipman argued against closing down the retail shop.

Each spring in preparation for the Chipmans' arrival, extensive work would be done to the house and grounds. The annual painting and plastering and the occasional extensive alteration indicate that the house was kept in good repair. During the Chipmans' summer occupancy, the house was a centre of social activity. The Chipman family itself must have given the house a carefree air and Chipman seems to have entertained there frequently.

C. C. Chipman's son, Hamilton Chipman, wrote an account of their life in the house at the lower fort.

The interior of the Residence was very different then from its present layout. The side facing south was occupied by the Stangers the year round and was partitioned off from our quarters. To the left of the main entrance was our drawing room – to the right the dining room, behind which was the kitchen, and adjoining the dining room the "schoolroom" where my sisters spent an hour or two daily with their governess. Upstairs were the sleeping quarters. I don't remember how many rooms there were but I do know that one was reserved as a guest room and there was accommodation for my mother and father, my sisters and their governess, the cook, a maid, my brother and me.

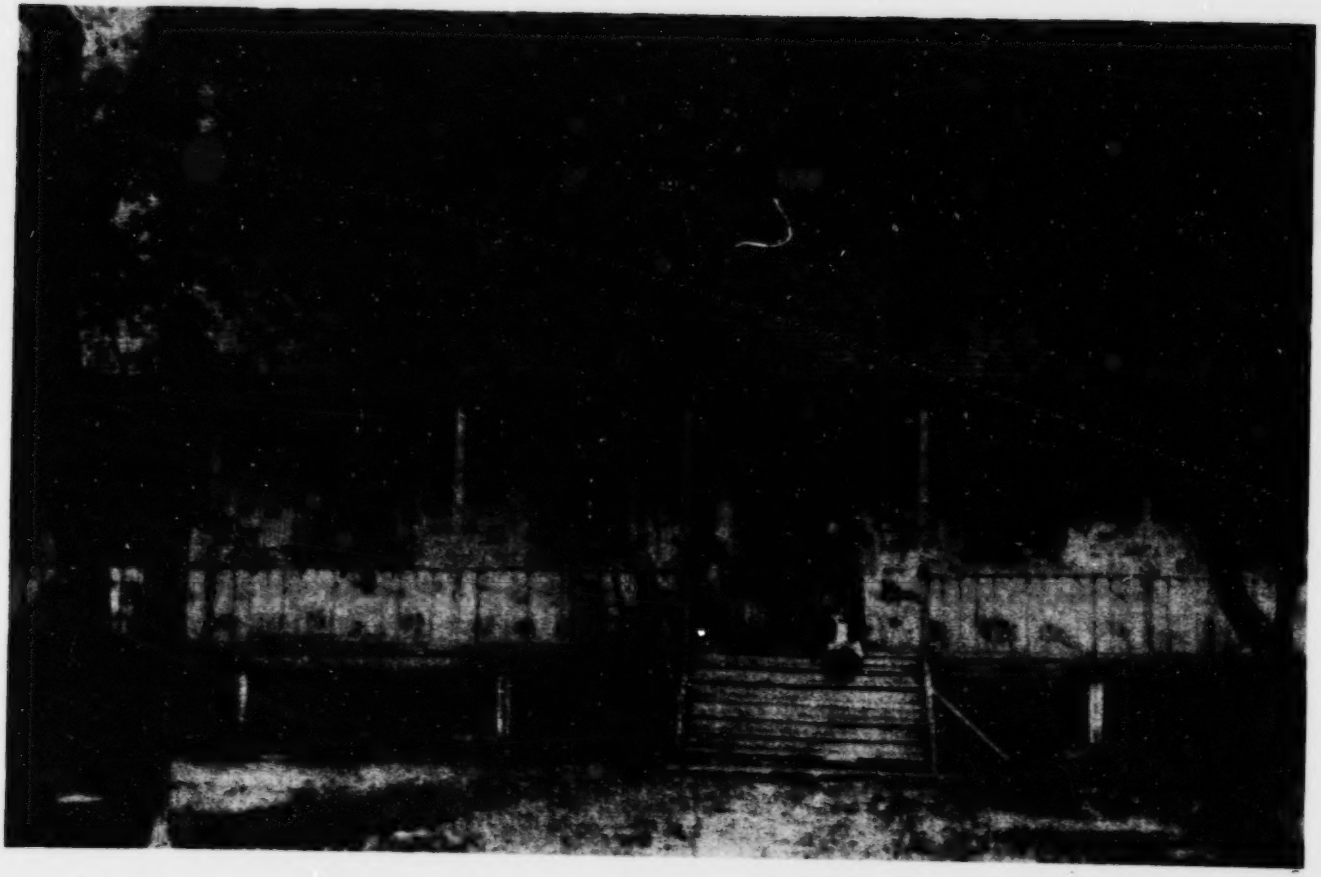
When extra guests arrived the school room was converted into a bedroom and my brother and I and our young friends slept in the hayloft, fully dressed except for our boots . . . .

Our family and friends were surprisingly comfortable in spite of a noticeable lack of modern conveniences. We had no hot and cold running water. Plumbing was primitive and there was no electric lighting. When darkness came, oil lamps were lit and guests, lamp in hand, mounted the stairs to the rooms assigned them by my mother. Each bedroom contained a bed, a chair, a mirror and a washstand on which was a basin and an iron pitcher filled with rain water. (The river water was far too muddy to use and besides was "hard as a rock.") The supply of rain water was replenished daily from barrels placed under the eavestroughs. The water had to be strained through netting for the barrels contained a multitude of "wrigglers" as we called the mosquito larvae. At times our stock of rain water ran short. Then the rumble of an approaching thunder storm was music to my mother's ear, and tubs, buckets and pots of all sizes were rushed out to catch the rain.

Guests were numerous during my father's twenty years tenure of office. I still have my mother's visitors' book and in it are the signatures of many of those who spent a day or more at the Lower Fort.

The name of Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, one time Prime Minister of Canada, appears on one of its pages, and those of Sir William Van Horne and Sir Sandford Fleming of Canadian Pacific Railway fame. Lord Strathcona, the Earl of Lichfield, Sir Thomas Skinner and Sir Robert Kindersley have inscribed their

6 In the early 1880s, this small group, possibly F. W. Holloway and his family, was photographed on the front veranda of the then somewhat dilapidated Big House. (*Hudson's Bay Company, Winnipeg.*)



names in the book. These four were Governors or Deputy Governors of the Hudson's Bay Company. Three Lieutenant-Governors of Manitoba, Sir Daniel McMillan, Sir Douglas Cameron and Sir James Aikins, were guests at the Lower Fort, as was Archbishop Matheson.

It was at Lower Fort Garry that I first met the Reverend Charles W. Gordon whose novels published under the pen name of "Ralph Connor" were best sellers for many years. Then there was W. H. Drummond, the "Habitant Poet," who read us a number of his poems in the French-Canadian vernacular of which he was a master. One visitor appealed particularly to the younger members of our family. He was a tall man, dramatic in speech and gesture, who could imitate the whistle of a gopher, the chatter of a squirrel and the notes of birds with amazing fidelity. I still treasure one of his books entitled ANIMAL HEROES. On the flypage is the inscription "C. C. Chipman with kind regards of Ernest Seton Thompson."

These guests might be described as occasional visitors. The regulars were the more intimate friends of my parents, all residents of Winnipeg, the J. B. Persses, the Walter T. Kirbys, the H. N. Ruttans, the A. J. Andrews and Colonel Evans of the Strathcona Horse — to name a few of many.

There was no set program of entertainment. Those invited seemed quite content to laze around in the sunshine, lolling in hammocks or sprawling in deck chairs. The men had their pipes or cigars; the ladies nibbled chocolates, with the latest novel of Marie Corelli or Hall Caine to entertain them. They didn't indulge in cigarettes for in those days women who smoked in public were regarded as being a trifle "fast." As the evening shadows lengthened, family and guests would seat themselves along the river bank and watch the Red River flowing silently and swiftly northward. At times the surface was smooth as glass, a moment later it would be broken into a score of circles as fish rose to strike at the mayflies fluttering aimlessly across the water. And on both sides of the river, whip-poorwills called to each other, their clear notes softened by the distance.[4]

Chipman goes on to tell of a visit of Lord and Lady Minto for a luncheon at the fort in 1904 and a later visit of Earl Grey who succeeded Lord Minto as Governor General. C. C. Chipman attracted guests not only as the commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company but also through his earlier relationship with Tupper and other high government officials.

In 1911, Chipman retired and in the same year the accounts of the retail shop were wound up as the Hudson's Bay Company closed its operations at the lower fort. The closing must have been abrupt for Chipman had undertaken extensive alterations of the house in the previous year.

Two years after the retail shop closed, the fort buildings and grounds were leased for a nominal sum to the Winnipeg Motor Country Club which occupied the fort for the following 50 years. The Big House served as the clubhouse where the bar, dining rooms, ball room and staff rooms were located. It was the focal point of the club and one of the social centres of the Winnipeg area.

Many alterations were made to the Big House between 1831-32, when it was constructed, and the present century when it was occupied by the Winnipeg Motor Country Club. Annual maintenance of course brought the most frequent changes, but periodically wholesale alterations were made necessary by a shift in the role of the house. The personal whim of an occasional occupant could lead to the rearrangement of partitions throughout the house, or the preparation for some important visitor sometimes brought a complete renovation. In the present century, the requirements of the Motor Country Club necessitated the introduction of many new features.

Some of these changes can be documented. The references are sometimes oblique; and in most cases not extensive. The following record makes note of documented changes which were made to the house over the long period of occupation.

Structure: 1831-32 to 1840

In 1830, George Simpson laid out the plan for a new fort and Hudson's Bay Company establishment on the lower Red River, some 20 miles from the then existing Fort Garry at the forks of the Assiniboine and Red rivers. That fall, construction of the new fort began under the direction of Pierre Leblanc, apparently a master mason. Simpson and Leblanc probably worked out the plans for the Big House together, Simpson supplying the broad outline of his requirements, and Leblanc the practical advice necessary for construction. The house was one of the first buildings constructed; it was finished in the fall of 1832 in time for the Simpsons and other members of the Hudson's Bay Company's Red River establishment to move in for the winter.

In initial concept, the Big House was much more modest in appearance than at a later date. In plan it consisted only of the main part of the house. The annex was not constructed until 1840, and the veranda now sweeping around three sides does not appear to have been constructed until the late 1840s or early 1850s.

Documentation: 1831-32 to 1840

We are building at the Rapids, which is the highest & best situation on the River, the materials stone & lime & if the plan I have begun be followed up it will be a respectable & comfortable Establish[t]. I don't expect to occupy it, as it will not be habitable until the Fall of 1833. Leblanc conducts the work and the McKenzie River men & recruits of last fall are the labourers. (HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 10 April 1831, p. 65, B.135/c/2.)

I had the satisfaction of seeing the Walls of the principal building nearly up before my departure, and hope to see New Fort Garry (the only stone & lime and I may add the most respectable looking Establishment in the Indian Country) occupied next Spring. (HBCA, London Inward, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 18 July 1831, p. 377, A.12/1.)

We are exceedingly well housed here in the new building. (James Hargrave, *The Hargrave Correspondence, 1821-1843* [Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938], pp. 95-7, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, 19 December 1832.)

Structure: 1840-49

The Big House did not weather well in the first years after its construction. When Isobel Finlayson, the sister of Frances Simpson, arrived in the settlement in 1840, she described the house as "old and dilapidated," and George Simpson complained of the bellied appearance of the ceilings in 1841. But the defects were partially corrected in the early 1840s. In 1840, the annex or "addition" was constructed on the west side of the building connected to the old part on the first floor and basement levels. The annex was constructed of *colombage pierroté* (wood framing with rubble masonry fill). The rest of the house must have been renovated for Simpson appears to have stayed at the lower fort frequently on his visits to the settlement and may have held at least one meeting of the Council of the Northern Department there.

In 1846, the fort and Big House were given over for the use of the Sixth Regiment of Foot which was brought to the Red River Settlement at the request of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Big House itself was used by the officers of the regiment and by the Royal Engineers who were sent to place the defences of Upper and Lower Fort Garry in order. The troops probably used the building harshly for a sketch of the front of the house during their occupancy shows the balustrade of the porch badly broken and in need of repair.

In 1848, the troops left the lower fort and the house reverted to use by Company personnel. It was recommended for Simpson's residence in the settlement, November 1848.

Documentation: 1840-49

Little or no change has taken place here since my sister left it, the large old dwelling house built of stone, which must have been cold and comfortless, even in its best days, was standing just as in her time, but it looked old and dilapidated as well as the buildings around it. One half of it was occupied by Mr. Black, and the other by Mr. Thom (the Recorder). (Isobel Finlayson, "York Boat Journal," *The Beaver,* Outfit 282 [December 1951], pp. 32-5.)

We shall, I think, have sufficient accommodation for all Comers at either Fort, so that you may hold your Council at whichever you please – You need be under no apprehension on the score of the bellied appearance of the ceiling of the Lower house as you will find better accommodation in the addition, which has been built thereto, last summer, than in the old house. (HBCA, Simpson Inward, Duncan Finlayson to Simpson, 1 May 1841, p. 138, D.5/6.)

The lower fort, which is about four times the size of the upper establishment, is in process of being enclosed by loopholed walls and bastions. This is my own headquarters when I visit the settlement; and here also resides Mr. Thom, the Recorder of Rupert's Land – so named in the royal charter. (George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World During the Years 1841 and 1842* [London: Colburn, 1847], Vol. 1, p. 55.)

A dwelling house containing about 20 rooms of various sizes on the basement and first storey where the officers might be quartered. (Dale Miquelon, *Lower Fort Garry: Preliminary Research Report* [Ottawa: National Historic Sites Service, 1964], p. 25, Simpson to Barclay, 24 December 1845).

10 (Sept.) . . . reached the Lower Fort Garry at 1/2 past 11 o'clock at night – the rain fell heavily all day and we landed in a cold and miserable state. Rheumatism tortured me throughout the journey and I gladly found myself under a roof, – Captain Beatty of the Royal Engineers and Mr. Bird of the H. B. Company received us. But we had to sleep on the floor, as the Lower Fort had no accommodations, all having been removed and the Fort given over to Captain Beatty for the troops. (PAC, MG12, WO1, Vol. 557, pp. 199-209, Crofton to Somerset, 15 September 1846.)

Structure: 1849-70

Shortly after the officers of the Sixth Regiment left the fort in the fall of 1848, the house was assigned to the newly appointed Anglican bishop of Rupert's Land. The changes made in anticipation of his arrival were extensive; the interior of the Big House was divided into two separate units, one for the bishop and another for his chaplain. The annex was retained for the use of the Company clerk. The bishop arrived in the fall of 1849 but soon moved out to assume charge of the boys' school when the previous master died.

In the fall of 1850, the house was given over to Eden Colvile, the associate governor in Rupert's Land, and his wife; other parts of the house were used by the Company clerk and occasional visitors. During the Colvile occupancy the house took on a much more genial atmosphere. The spacious, wide veranda appears to have been added at this time and the grounds around the house were kept well groomed. The restoration to this period has assumed that some of the changes made in 1849 such as the dividing of the mess hall were removed after the bishop's short stay.

Following the departure of the Colviles, the Big House served mainly as the residence for the gentleman or clerk in charge of Lower Fort Garry with the other officers in the Red River district occasionally coming down from the upper fort to stay in the house. During this period there were no extensive changes made to the building which can be ascertained from the documents.

Documentation: 1849-70

You will make over to the Bishop, the principal house at the Lower Fort, with the exception of the wing, which it is advisable to retain for our own accommodation, it being in the meantime occupied by Mr. Black. The Communication between the wing and the main house must be walled up, thereby making two entirely distinct houses, with seperate entrances. The mess room you will please divide into two, and in appropriating the

accommodation, the Bishop should be put in possession of all that part formerly occupied during the Sitting of the Councils with the front entrance, consisting of 6 rooms together with Kitchen, Servants rooms, cellars, etc. His Lordship's Chaplain can occupy that portion of the House formerly inhabited by Mr. Thom with a separate entrance, Consisting of four rooms besides Kitchen, Servants rooms and Cellars. The requisite alterations and repairs should be entered upon without delay and the residence put in order for the reception of the Bishop and his suite immediately on arrival at the Settlement. (HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Ballenden, 28 June 1849, p. 66, D.4/39.)

Agreeably to your instructions when here, the large dwelling house at this place, has been completely arranged, for the accommodation of Bishop Anderson, and his Chaplain, but the furniture of the several rooms, is far from what they have been accustomed to, the deficiency may however, be afterwards prepared and completed under their own direction. (HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 24 July 1849, p. 403, D.5/25.)

Since I last wrote you matters in the Colony have gone very quietly. The Bishop and party arrived on the 3rd of October & immediately took possession of and seemed to be well pleased with their residence at the Lower Fort. He had with him one clergyman and a reader both with wives, and I was therefore under the necessity of allowing one of them to take possession of the little house occupied by Mr. Christie last year. He intends leaving it however, in a few weeks and no further occupant shall take possession until we have the pleasure of seeing you. (HBCA, Simpson Inward, Ballenden to Simpson, 29 November 1849, p. 625, D.5/26.)

Statement of pine timber to be procured at lower fort, 3 March 1851.

Verandah Govs. House

X 8 pieces 20 feet long
9 x 3 1/2 ins. 2/3 ea.

\# 15 pieces 17 feet long
8 x 3 1/2 ins. 1/9 ea.
16 pieces 10 feet long
8 x 3 1/2 ins. 1/ ea.

* 8 pieces 10 feet long
6 1/2 x 3 ins. /10 ea.

X These 8 pieces to be afterwards sawn at the fort each into 2 pieces 20 feet long 4 1/2 x 3 1/2 ins.

\# These 15 pieces to be afterwards sawn each into 4 pieces 8 1/2 feet long 4 x 3 1/4 ins.

* These 8 pieces to be afterwards sawn each into 2 pieces 10 1/2 feet long, 3 x 3 1/4 ins. (PAC, MG19, A40, IIA.)

The buildings at the lower fort are somewhat older [than those at the upper fort]; the one we occupied during our stay there, the residence of the officials, being a stately old mansion with wide verandahs, lofty ceilings, heavy old fashioned furniture, with plenty of brass, even to swinging knobs on the doors, plastered walls painted green, floors bare of everything but skins, and open fireplaces in every room. (S. Hubbard Scudder, *The Winnipeg Country* [New York: Hodges, 1890], pp. 119-20.)

Entering through the huge gateway pierced in the centre of the east wall, facing the river, the first view is of the residence of the chief trader in command, and also of the clerks and upper class of employés under his charge. It is a long two-story stone building with a broad piazza encircling it on three sides. A square plot of green sward surrounding it is fenced in with neat railing and kept in extremely good order. A broad gravel walk leads from the gateway to the piazza. Huge shade trees border it, and beds of waving and fragrant flowers load the business air with their perfume. In this building the mess of the chief and his subordinates is held. Its hospitalities are extended in good old English style. A room is set apart for the use of the transient guest, who is free to come and go as he lists. (H. M. Robinson, *The Great Fur Land* [London: Sampson, Low, 1879], pp. 73-4.

Sam. Taylor plastering mess room & Mr. Watts rooms. (HBCA, Journal, 10 October 1868.)

One man continues repairing & fitting up the outside windows on big house. (HBCA, Journal, 19 November 1868.)

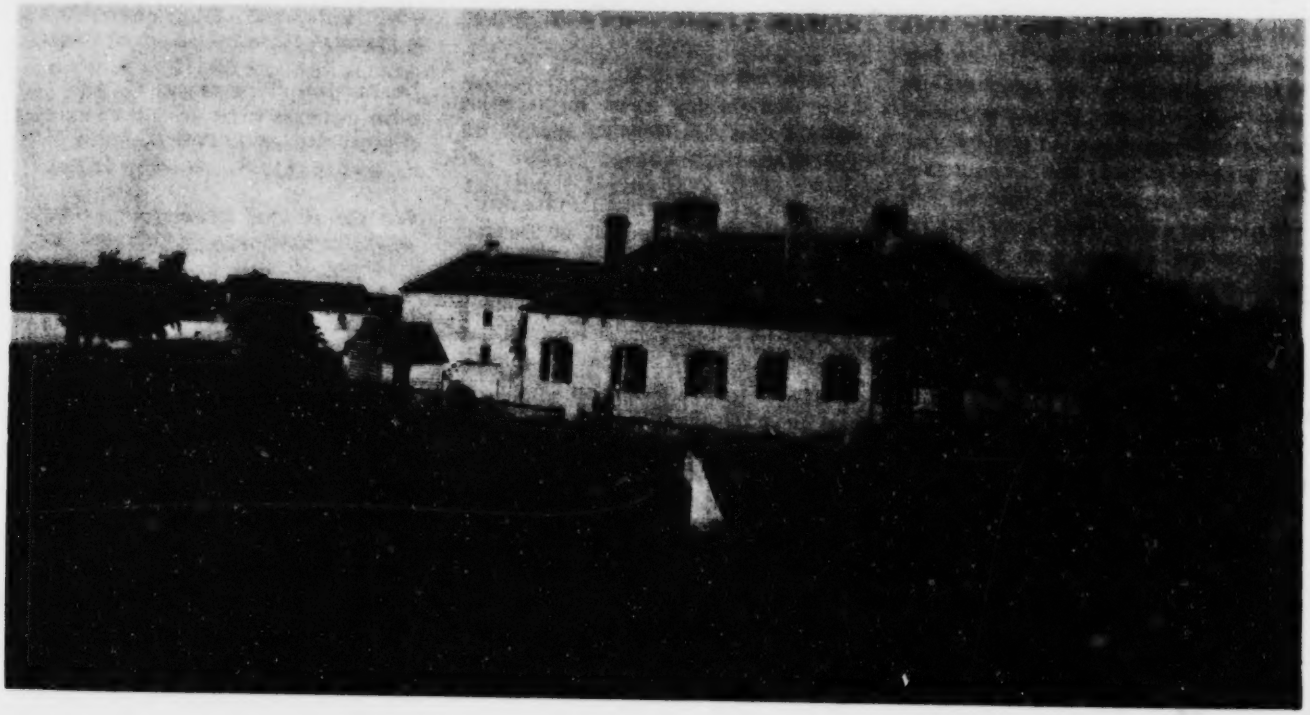
Two men whitewashing the rooms [Big House]. (HBCA, Journal, 20 May 1869.)

One man preparing wood for balcony at dwelling house [refs. continue to preparing wood and working on balcony at the Big House]. (HBCA, Journal, 22 June 1869.)

Structure: 1870-80

In 1870, the attic of the Big House was

7 By the early 1880s, the Big House, with its sagging, weathered veranda, was beginning to show its age. A children's playhouse (*right*) and the small cart in the foregound gave the house a familial air. (***Hudson's Bay Company, Winnipeg.***)



prepared for the occupancy of the officers of the Quebec Rifles who were assigned to the lower fort in the year following the Red River uprising. This appears to have been the first extensive use of the upstairs portion of the house. The area was divided into 12 bedrooms each lighted by a small skylight cut into the roof and glazed. Presumably the form of access was changed from the earlier trapdoor and ladder to a set of stairs. This same area was used by the officers of the North-West Mounted Police who came to the fort in 1873-74 when the accommodations were described as being "about as bad as they well could be."

In the remainder of the house, extensive alterations and renewals were undertaken in the ten-year period. The veranda was repaired and the paling around the front of the house may have been replaced. The roof was reshingled. On the interior, the north end of the main house was extensively altered for the occupancy of inspecting Chief Factor Robert Hamilton's family. Partitions were taken down and others installed (this may have been the period when the mess hall, as now interpreted, was divided into three rooms). Hamilton's quarters were apparently quite elaborate: the walls were papered, rooms were extensively repainted, and the floors were carpeted. The kitchen at the north end of the building may have been added at this time or later in 1879, when the house was used by James Grahame.

Included among the alterations for the Grahames was the building of a chimney. This may have been the chimney at the north end of the house which sometime late in the 19th century was extended by the addition of a brick portion.

Documentation: 1870-80

Two men hauling gravel for repairing walks in the fort. (HBCA, Journal, 16 July 1870.)

Two men preparing a partition for dwelling house. (HBCA, Journal, 20 October 1870.)

Ensuite le haut de la grande maison occuper les officiers actuellement il faut faire 12 chambres à coucher et à chaques chambre il faut un chassis car il n'y a que seul sur le toit. Les hommes de M. Hamel ont commencer a cette dernière ouvrage aujourd'hui. (PAC, RG11, 9B, Subject 429, Vol. 119, Beaupré to Braun, 26 October 1870.)

To 1 fine green paint, (HBCA, Accounts, 6 February 1871, B.303/d/51.)

Two men whitewashing and plastering the kitchen. (HBCA, Journal, 3 November 1871.)

Two carpenters preparing wood for balcony; 12 August – four men repairing the balcony at the Big House; 16 August – four men working at the balcony; 22 August – three men repairing the balcony. (HBCA, Journal, 31 July 1872.)

Two men pumping out the water from the kitchen. (HBCA, Journal, 3 June 1872.)

House carpenters continue preparing banisters for paling round the house. (HBCA, Journal, 20 April 1872.)

Pipes p. house 14 lbs. sheet iron; 28 December, 14 3/4 lbs. sheet iron, HBCA, Accounts, 23 December 1872, B.303/d/65.)

[A number of references to nails and other materials to repairing the veranda.] (HBCA, Accounts, 8 August to 11 September 1872.)

Got the porches taken down. (HBCA, Journal, 4 April 1873.)

Got the outside windows taken off. (HBCA, Journal, 9 April 1873.)

2 lbs. black paint, painting house. (HBCA, Accounts, 5 June 1873, B.303/d/78b.)

1 lb. green paint, painting house. (HBCA, Accounts, 6 June 1873, B.303/d/78b.)

[References to lathing and plastering which continue until 20 October.] (HBCA, Accounts, 13 September 1873, B.303/d/101.)

One man painting anti-room (HBCA, Journal, 18 December 1873.)

The barracks accommodation for the men is very good. The officers quarters are about as bad as they well could be, being merely the attics of the quarters occupied by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company and divided from each other by wooden partitions which do not reach the ceilings. (Dale Miquelon, *Lower Fort Garry: Preliminary Research Report* [Ottawa: National Historic Sites Service, 1964], PAC, RG18, A/1, Item 7/74, Comptroller's Office, 7 January 1874.)

Four men taking down the partitions in the north end of the Big House. [Note: From June until well into the fall, men

are involved in the alterations for the accommodation of Robert Hamilton's quarters in the Big House. The alterations cost a total of $1,600.86.] (HBCA, Journal, 22 June 1874.)

Five men papering and painting Mr. Hamilton's quarters. (HBCA, Journal, 27 August 1874.)

Two men putting down the carpets in Mr. Hamilton's quarters. (HBCA, Journal, 7 September 1874.)

Paint for Mr. Hamilton's quarters: 3 lbs. brown paint, 1/2 lb. black paint, 10 1/4 lbs. white paint, 3 lbs. red paint, 7 lbs. Spanish whiting, 1 lb. common black paint, 12 lbs. common white paint. (HBCA, Accounts, 1874, B.303/d/137.)

1 carpenter 12 days at 2.50 making porch for kitchen. (HBCA, Accounts, 19 December 1874, B.303/d/137.)

46 pounds 1" bar iron chimneys H. B. House. (HBCA, Accounts, 9 January 1876, B.303/d/157.)

14 pounds paint – yellow. (HBCA, Accounts, 20 April 1877, B.303/d/157.)

1 pound paint – red. (HBCA, Accounts, 14 May 1877, B.303/d/157.)

10 pound tin of white paint
1 pint paint oil
55 pounds shingle nails
cedar shingles (HBCA, Accounts, 20 June 1877, B.303/d/157.)

1 lb. tin of green paint. (HBCA, Accounts, 16 July 1877, B.303/d/157.)

1 lb. tin of green paint
4 lbs of white paint. (HBCA, Accounts, 23 July 1877, B.303/d/157.)

4 lbs. of white paint. (HBCA, Accounts, 24 July 1877, B.303/d/157.)

9 Cedar shingles. (HBCA, Accounts, 16 January 1877, B.303/d/157.)

To William Johnston 9 1/3 days whitewashing and painting quarters. (HBCA, Accounts, 9 January 1877, B.303/d/118.)

1 lb. green paint, (HBCA, Accounts, 13 August 1878, B.303/d/157.)

The work on the quarters you are to occupy at G. L. is getting on nicely. The floor in the kitchen is laid and will be painted. The chimney is well under way. We are ordering down more bricks today to complete it as there were not sufficient to do so. As soon as the chimney is finished the lightning rod man will go down and put up the rod. (HBCA, Commissioner James A. Grahame, Correspondence Inward (General), G. S. McTavish to Grahame, 27 May 1879, pp. 98-9, D.14/20.)

[From the week ending 24 May to the week ending 14 June 1879, a number of men were involved "cleaning kitchen for Mrs. Grahame," and "fixing kitchen," and so on for chief commissioner.] (HBCA, Accounts, Labour Book, Outfit 1879-80, B.303/d/150b.)

1 lb. red paint. (HBCA, Accounts, 10 May 1879, B.303/d/150a.)

[From week ending 22 May 1880 to week ending 5 June 1880, men were working on the chief commissioner's quarters probably preparing them for his occupancy.] (HBCA, Accounts, 1880, B.303/d/150b.)

5 bus. lime for whitewash, Hudson's Bay House. (HBCA, Accounts, 10 May 1880, B.303/d/157.)

Robert Massey 2 days whitewashing Chief Commissioner's quarters. (HBCA, Accounts, 22 May 1880, B.303/d/153.)

2 lbs. yellow paint. (HBCA, Accounts, 13 May 1880, B.303/d/157.)

Structure: 1881-90

By 1881, the Big House was 50 years old and it had not aged gracefully. Annual maintenance had not been sufficient to arrest definite structural decline. Pictures of the house from this period show a rather shabby, weathered exterior and a sagging veranda. The lower fort was declining in importance and the house would probably have fallen into ruins had not the newly appointed commissioner, J. Wrigley, taken a personal interest in its upkeep. Like Grahame before him and Chipman later, Wrigley saw in the house a comfortable home where he could move his family in the hot summer months. It was especially attractive when compared to the official residence in Winnipeg which was poorly constructed and uncomfortable from the time of its erection.

In 1885, Wrigley sent a Winnipeg architect, C. O. Wickenden, to inspect the house to determine the repairs which would be necessary to place the house in order. Wickenden recommended that it be reshingled, that small gable windows replace the skylights installed in 1870, that the area and basement entrances at the back of the building be filled in, that the rotten basement flooring be taken up

and replaced with concrete, and that the beam in the south room of the house be reinforced with a truss. Outside, he suggested that the veranda be repaired, the fence rebuilt, and that a soil pit should be built close to the wall of the house.

Many of Wickenden's suggestions were eventually carried out and presumably soon after he submitted his report. Four years later, when the damp basement was still causing problems, W. J. McLean, the chief trader living in the house, referred to a "considerable sum" which had been spent "a short time ago" in fixing the basement. And judging from the changed exterior of the house in pictures and in actual structure, the Wickenden recommendations were adopted as a package. The area was filled in. Gable windows were installed on the roof very much like those which he sketched in his report, and the beam in the south room was reinforced with a truss. Possibly the north door and window in the annex were added at this time.

After the Wickenden repairs, and possibly completing his recommendations, the veranda was repaired in 1887. On the interior of the building W. J. McLean dressed up his apartment by papering and painting extensively.

Documentation: 1881-90

HB House: 1 lb. green paint, 1/2 lb. blue. (HBCA, Accounts, 4 February 1881, B.303/d/157.)

Cash paid James Harper, repairing balcony. (HBCA, Accounts, 1 August 1882, p.185, B.303/d/157.)

Cash paid James Harper for 16 days repairing and putting on storm windows. (HBCA, Accounts, 20 November 1882, p. 205, B.303/d/171.)

Will Western for plastering in H.B. House. (HBCA, Accounts, 22 May 1884, B.303/d/178.)

By food for 3 plasterers while repairing H.B. House. (HBCA, Accounts, 1 June 1884, B.303/d/182.)

The dwelling consists of two distinct houses built apparently at different periods and joined together by a porch or vestibule with front entrance at ground or principal floor and two rear entrances at basement level – There is a stone basement under the entire building – The principal part or house C. facing river is constructed of rubble masonry the western addition D is above basement framed & finished outside with rough cast plaster – nearly the whole of the stone heads & sills of doors and windows are fractured by settlement – those which have opened to any extent I would recommend should be replaced. These buildings C & D should be refitted and shingled in the spring and painted with metallic roof paint about September – There are some portions of the rear wall where considerable damage by settlement has taken place and the masonry needs to be repaired – The plaster to underside of roof of C. should be repaired much of it has been lathed the wrong way. This should be relathed with the old material and plastered. The roof lights which are small glazed hatches, I think should be taken off & small gables (?) run out when roof is re-shingled so that the sash could be put in vertically this would allow a winter sash to be arranged to slide inside of rafters – the hatch light could then be hung like a casement – this would cause a marked difference in the temperature of the building. The connecting porch or vestibule E is in a bad condition & has been heaved by frost – it requires to be renewed and altered. At the present time everything has to be carried to and from the trader's kitchen through the Dining room & vestibule – this might be altered with advantage by erecting a door as shown in red on No. 1 altering stairway to basement & raising roof of F. when it is renewed – The beam carrying joists over dining room has sagged over three inches. This should be made good & a light truss rod put in if necessary upon examination. The plaster of dining room walls ceiling & of other parts of C is continually scaling & is badly damaged. The floor of this room should be taken up & inch boards cut in on strips between joints in which should be placed 2" of nogging or mortar this would be brought out to the plaster behind base and the floor relaid. The basement as I understand will in the future be only used as cellarage. – The area and the three basement entrances (see F. in block plan and section on plan No. 1) are I think unnecessary. The area collecting water from the whole of the back roof & from around rear of building and allowing the frost to sink below the foundations – This section of area will at once account for the damage to walls at rear of building and in a less degree for that to the remaining walls. I think this open space should be filled up leaving only small areas to those windows to portions of cellarage where light is necessary. There

are I am informed two drains from the building – one cannot at present be found and the other is frozen up – I hear that every spring after the thaw about 2 ft. of water accumulates in the cellar which seeps through the basement walls & area – the drains should therefore at once be made effective and as the old building is still to be used for residence a soil pit should be constructed & made water tight a few feet from the cellar wall.

All the sashes to windows painted where sound and glazed where necessary storm sashes being supplied to those windows where they are at present wanting.

The basement floor is for the most part rotten. This should be removed and if the item is not considered too expensive I would recommend that after the drains are put in the basement should be packed to level of present basement floor and concreted this would prevent the mink & ermine which burrow either under or through the open joints in the foundations and so assist the destruction by water & frost. . . .

New posts should be put in to carry verandah with plank feet and below line of frost. The fence around garden (G block plan) requires to be overhauled and then painted much of the work would have been in far better condition had it been protected by paint. (Lower Fort Garry: Condition of Buildings, C. O. Wickenden to Wrigley, 2 March 1885, D.19/2.)

By expense on account of C. McBean for papering in dining room. (HBCA, Accounts, 22 June 1886, B.303/d/178.)

To eavestrough to dwelling house. (HBCA, Accounts, 20 May 1886, p. 63, B.303/d/186.)

That the buildings be kept in a state of repair: the dwelling house with a view of being available as a residence and the warehouses for use in the event of more business being carried on here. That enquiries be made whether the lumber now forming partitions in the buildings formerly occupied as an asylum could not be used in carrying out the necessary repairs to verandah floors. (Suggestion with Inspection Report, March 1887, Section H, p. 72, B.235/e/22.)

[Repairs made to verandah including painting.] (HBCA, Accounts, 13 May to 25 May 1887, p. 41, B.303/d/192.)

By expense on account paid by W. J. McLean for paper for house. (HBCA, Accounts, 10 September 1887, p. 45, B.303/d/197.)

By repairs and improvements; verandah – Paid F. Robinson. (HBCA, Accounts, 24 September 1887, p. 45, B.303/d/197.)

By repairs and improvements for cash paid R. H. Gilhuly for 5 gallons of paint for verandah. (HBCA, Accounts, 27 October 1887, p. 49, B.303/d/197.)

[Various cash outlays for work and materials for repairs to the veranda.] (HBCA, Accounts, 23 May to 27 October 1887, p. 17, B.303/d/199.)

Rodk. McPherson for plastering in House. (HBCA, Accounts, 13 June 1887, p. 17, B.303/d/199.)

It is desirable that the two houses should be kept perfectly distinct, but under the circumstances I have pleasure in authorizing you to occupy one room in the house lately vacated by Mr. Ross up to the first April next. (HBCA, Commissioner Joseph Wrigley, Correspondence Outward [General], Wrigley to Mrs. McLean, 4 October 1888, p. 569, D.18/6.)

Paid Talbot and Saunders for wallpaper. (HBCA, Accounts, 28 February 1889, p. 123, B.303/d/197.)

I am sorry to learn though a considerable sum was spent a short time ago on the cellar under the house it is still very damp. What would you suggest be done? (HBCA, Commissioner Joseph Wrigley, Correspondence Outward [General], Wrigley, Comments on Inspection, 22 June 1889, p. 725, D.18/7.)

The expenditure on the cellar was incurred before I took charge at the lower fort and the repairs were, I believe, carried out under the Superintendence of the Company's architect and the clerk then in charge. I don't know whether a concrete floor was called for, certainly there is none which is very much needed. By keeping an occasional fire on, probably some or all the damp may be avoided. I think it will be well and tending to preserve the building to have the outside of the stone painted. By using the services of the labourer on part of the work, the cost should not exceed $50. (HBCA, Commissioner Joseph Wrigley, Correspondence Inward, McLean to Wrigley, 6 July 1889, D.19/16.)

If it is found absolutely necessary that something be done to remedy the damp-

ness of the cellars in the house, estimates should be previously submitted. (HBCA, Commissioner Joseph Wrigley, Correspondence Outward [General], Wrigley to McLean, 8 August 1889, p. 848-1/2, D.18/7.)

Shingling roof of kitchen
Papering and painting in house. (HBCA, Accounts, Repairs and Improvements, 1889, p. 62, B.303/d/198.)

Expense account for cash paid E. Brown for sundry repairs on dwelling house and shop. (HBCA, Accounts, 23 February 1890, p. 171, B.303/d/209.)

To 20 days taking down paper, plastering, papering and painting and fixing doors etc. in north end of dwelling house. (HBCA, Accounts, July 1890, B.303/z/4 [loose page].)

Structure: 1891-1900

C. C. Chipman, the chief commissioner who replaced Wrigley, took an even greater interest in the lower fort and Big House. Each spring he brought his family down to the fort where his children had the run of the large old house during the summer months. Consequently the house was kept in much better repair. Each year men were employed kalsomining, painting or patching the plaster. The outward appearance of the building and gardens improved markedly, and presumably so did the interior.

Old age also made more extensive work on the house necessary. In 1894, apparently under the supervision of an architect, "additional posts and underpinning" were put in the basement to support the first floor. Nine posts were added. (A post support system was included in the restoration of the Big House and annex basements. It is probable that some of this was added in 1894, although the whole chronology is uncertain for the system was again changed in the early 20th century.) Upstairs, more rooms were created by dividing a large area in the south end of the attic into five rooms. During the Chipman era, the upstairs was used as a sleeping area by the large Chipman family.

Most of the work, however, consisted of minor repairs. In 1896, lattice was added to the veranda and in 1900, the roof was completely reshingled or patched considerably. The annual repairs and extensive garden — more than 20 trees were planted around the grounds — gave the house a very pleasing appearance.

Documentation: 1891-1900

The surface water instead of being allowed to run into the basement should be conducted into the main drain, to enter the drain outside the building [dwelling house]. This may be done in an inexpensive manner. It is reported that a man in about two or three days could do this by constructing a gutter that would lead the water into the drain through a grating. (HBCA, Commissioner Joseph Wrigley, Correspondence Outward [General], Wrigley to McLean, 3 February 1891, p. 454, D.18/8.)

The method suggested for conveying surface water round the dwelling House into the main drain leading from the basement of the house out to the bank of the river can be carried out, but whether with complete success or not, I do not know but the experiment is, I think, well worth trying. Is the surface drain thus formed to remain open? (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Reports, McLean to Wrigley, 21 February 1891, p. 1, B.303/e/7.)

Complying with your request I have to report upon the damage to the buildings at Lower Fort Garry on Monday last, by the storm, and the necessary repairs. . . .4) Fence round dwelling House. Much of it blown down, and many of the posts broken. This was a paling which had become very rotten, I would suggest as much cheaper, a wire fence on tamarac posts, with 3 strands of wire, a top-rail, and a 12 inch board at base. The cost should not exceed $75.00 . . . . I take the opportunity of referring to the condition of the basement of the dwelling house. It is damp and cold, causing an excessive outlay for heating the house, besides being a source of danger to health. At present no fewer than nine (9) stoves are necessary to keep the house even partially warm. A hot air furnace would cost from $150. to $200.00 and would tend to keep the cellar dry, and preserve the foundation of the house, and be much more economical. I could afford an increase of 2.50 to 3.00 pr. month rent for this necessary improvement. (HBCA, C. C. Chipman, Correspondence Inward, McLean to Chipman, 26 June 1891, D.22/1.)

To Rodk. McPherson for 49 hours work on Dwelling house. Lathing and kalsomining at 30c per hour and 200 lath. (HBCA, Accounts, 28 February 1892, p. 97, B.303/d/229.)

To customers James McCorrister for the following services in 1894

13 Days - scraping and preparing walls of house
10 Days - Kalsomining & whitewashing same
6 Days - painting floors
18 Days - cleaning and making gravel walks. . .
7 Days - making platform and porches [at house]
3 Days - cutting and fitting new shutters (were too large) [Big House?]
3 Days - making new outhouse
13 Days - painting W. Washing & papering West Wing
2 Days - putting Basement doors & windows in order

(For list of materials see File: Rent-Repairs and Improvements, Lower Fort Garry, Outfit 1894.) (HBCA, Accounts, 1894, pp. 420-1, B.303/d/246.)

With reference to the conversation which the commissioner had with you on the subject, I now write at his request to confirm what was said to you on Monday last, and to instruct you to have the following work done as soon as the weather will permit . . .

Drains: To ascertain whether they are in good working order; and if not, what is required to make them so.

Basement: To be thoroughly cleaned, straw and rubbish to be taken from the ceiling and cleaned away. Additional underpinning or supports to be put under floors in accordance with architect's instructions. To facilitate this work, a letter is enclosed to Captain Robinson of Selkirk, asking him to let the Company have the loan of one or two jack screws.

First Floor: Baseboards to be taken off, paper to be scraped off, walls and ceiling and woodwork to be well scrubbed and made ready for painters.

Attics: To be cleaned and made ready for carpenters. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Correspondence Inward, William Clark to J. H. Stanger, 8 February 1894, B.303/c/folder.)

To R. R. McDonald by expense 4 days setting posts under flooring in house, pulling down partitions. (HBCA, Accounts, 14 March 1894, p. 164, B.303/d/244.)

To Duncan McLeod by repairs and improvements, 7 days setting flooring under house and other work. (HBCA, Accounts, 31 March 1894, p. 177, B.303/d/244.)

To R. R. McDonald by repairs and improvements, 1 day setting posts under flooring and clearing up attic etc.

Repairs and improvements, paid for 9 posts used for supporting flooring in house. (HBCA, Accounts, 31 March 1894, p. 178, B.303/d/244.)

Repairs and improvements: On dwelling house, west end 3 lbs. cut nails. (HBCA, Accounts, 18 June 1894, p. 49, B.303/d/246.)

To Roderick McPherson. . . .27 hours work plastering and patching in the west end of dwelling. (HBCA, Accounts, 27 June 1894, p. 136, B.303/d/246.)

R. Moncrieff had to be paid part of what is due him on his contract for work done on the Big House occupied by the Commissioner. Several days ago the Commissioner handed me the papers re. this work instructing me to settle it . . . . the full amount of Moncrieff's contract is $267. Extras allowed by architect $25.50 and he claims $8 more. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Clarke, 21 July 1894, p. 254, B.303/b/9.)

I beg to enclose Requisition number 31 for wallpaper required for the improvement of the dwelling house here 27-1/2 double rolls of wallpaper. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Clarke, 21 August 1894, p. 279, B.303/b/9.)

Enclose requisition No. 50 . . . . The carpet and curtain fixtures are for myself and I wrote to Mr. Hall on Monday and asked him to send the twenty yards carpet. [It] is for a border around the rug in the sitting room.

20 yds. tapestry carpet .50.
2/3 doz. fixtures to pull down blinds
2/3 doz. fixtures to hold back curtains

(HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Clarke, 24 October 1894, p. 476, B.303/b/11.)

Credit William Donald – Drawing 34 loads of earth and gravel for banking around house and shop. (HBCA, Accounts, 27 October 1894, p. 214, B.303/d/246.)

Paid James McCorrister for work taking down porches and fixing doors etc. [probably storm porches]. (HBCA, Accounts, 3 April 1895, p. 365, B.303/d/246.)

Expenses, Tree planting:
Paid John T. Clarke for planting 6 spruce trees on lawn and furnishing the trees.
John T. Clarke: for 21 spruce trees and planting them in lawn. (HBCA,

Accounts, 23 April 1895, pp. 384, 389, B.303/d/246.)

7 lbs. yellow ochre; 1/2 gall. Bd. oil; 1/2 gall. spirits of turpentine. (HBCA, Accounts, 14 June 1895, p. 12, B.303/d/254.)

Paid James McCorrister for making shelves in east window. (HBCA, Accounts, 31 July 1895, p. 56, B.303/d/254.)

Pd. J. Hourston for cleaning and fitting stove pipes, cleaning chimneys to 2 days. (HBCA, Accounts, 23 October 1895, p. 144, B.303/d/254.)

Paid James McCorrister for making wood box and for fitting double windows, 2-1/2 days. (HBCA, Accounts, 30 November 1895, p. 192, B.303/d/254.)

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, from Victoria, on this subject, and in reply to state that the work is now being performed according to your instructions, and with due regard to economy and despatch. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 25 April 1896, p. 31, B.303/b/14.)

Repairs and Improvements: On commissioners residence, Pd. James McCorrister for 3-1/2 days painting etc. (HBCA, Accounts, 21 May 1896, p. 63, B.303/d/258b.)

Repairs and Improvements: Pd. W. Lyons for 1/2 load sand to make mortar for patching, plastering residence. (HBCA, Accounts, 26 May 1896, p. 67, B.303/d/258b.)

Repairs and Improvements: Commissioner's Residence 2 prs. butt hinges . . . 2 tins red paint, 2 tins black paint, 1 tin green paint, 3 tins grey paint, 10 tins grey paint, 1 tin green paint, 35 lbs. yellow ochre. (HBCA, Accounts, 30 May 1896, p. 71, B.303/d/258b.)

Repairs and Improvements: Making lattice work on verandah. Pd. Jas. McCorrister 6-1/2 days. (HBCA, Accounts, 20 June 1896, p. 96, B.303/d/258b.)

General Charges: Commissioner's residence
4 Sept. Paid Hooker and Company for lumber for eavestroughing — Paid Hooker and Company for lumber for seat in water closet. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, 7 November 1896, p. 131, B.303/b/16.)

Repairs and Improvements: Paid James McCorrister, for repairing and fitting double windows on Commissioner's house, dwelling house, office and shop. (HBCA, Accounts, 13 November 1896, p. 251, B.303/d/258b.)

I beg to acknowledge the receipt this date of your letter of the 11th instant with reference to the necessary repairs to be made on your residence and in reply to state that the work is already begun. I had put a careful man to work at whitewashing the little kitchen and the ceilings of the three rooms. The kitchen is done ceiling and walls; and the ceilings of the three rooms will be finished tomorrow and cracks repaired near the chimney in the school room.

The alabastine will be put on the three rooms as soon as possible, but if we had a better kalsomine brush than those that we have, a better job could be made of the walls.

We have not yet received the paint for the verandah, but there should be no difficulty in mixing it thoroughly here, and putting it on a uniform color. The verandah both ends and front contains about 107 square yards, and the front alone, about 70 square yards, with the dimensions a painter would know how much paint would be wanted for the work intended to be done.

In the garden we have sown peas, beans, tomatoes, onions, turnips, parsnips, beets, carrots two kinds, lettuce two kinds, and planted 150 cabbage plants and 24 cauliflower plants, and some potatoes. Any other plants that may be required could probably be had at the Selkirk greenhouses. We are careful to leave the plants covered at night when there are indications of low temperature.

I will see that all the outhouses be put in proper order with the least possible delay.

The north kitchen porch is falling more away from the house on account of the foundation being rotten, and crumbling down. I intended to have it raised, and a new foundation placed under it, as we have timber here suitable for that purpose. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 13 May 1897, pp. 183-4, B.303/b/14.)

Improvement: Painting verandah etc.
3-1/4 tins pearl grey paint
1/2 tin brown paint; 1-1/2 gal. paint oil;

1/2 gal. turpentine. (HBCA, Accounts, 28 May 1897, p. 390, B.303/d/258b.)

Pd. J. Clouston
repairs on eavestroughing; repairs on range; putting pipes in rain barrels. (HBCA, Accounts, 29 May 1897, p. 391, B.303/d/258b.)

Pd. James McCorrister, Kalsomining Commissioners house 3-1/2 days, (HBCA, Accounts, 31 May 1897, p. 392, B.303/d/258b.)

Pd. James McCorrister, 10-1/2 days last May kalsomining and finishing lower rooms in Commissioners house. (HBCA, Accounts, 2 July 1897, p. 51, B.303/d/272.)

To Roderick McPherson
Kalsomining Commissioners house 40 hours. (HBCA, Accounts, August 1897, p. 141, B.303/d/259.)

Lower Fort Garry Improvements:
Banking around the Commissioner's residence under verandah and bank around shop all with gravel. (HBCA, Accounts, 28 October 1897, p. 120, B.303/d/263.)

Improvements:
Painting shutters and doors etc. (HBCA, Accounts, 30 October 1897, p. 121, B.303/d/263.)

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, in which you are pleased to impart the good news of your family's arrival here about the middle of May. May they have a good voyage. In reply I beg to say that the garden will be attended to at once, and flowers put in as desired. The lawn has all been rolled up, and appears to have been improved by the top dressing of last fall. [wants authority] . . . to repair or renew the foundation of the verandah. We could have it finished before your family arrive, and would not be the cause of any inconvenience to them. Last fall we had gravel filled in under the verandah in all the hollows; and up against the basement sloping outward and last month we had the snow all shovelled about eight feet back and no water got into the basement this spring. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 20 April 1898, p. 270, B.303/b/14.)

One bu. lime; whitewashing lattice on verandah. (HBCA, Accounts, 19 May 1898, p. 271, B.303/d/263.)

To H. M. Johnston – fitting key for commissioner's house. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, 9 June 1898, p. 422, B.303/b/16.)

Jas. Clarke – placing hitching posts. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, 27 July 1898, p. 422, B.303/b/16.)

H. M. Johnston – bolts and rings for hitching posts. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, 6 August 1898, p. 422, B.303/b/16.)

James McCorrister, repairing roof of commissioner's house. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, 9 August 1898, p. 422, B.303/b/16.)

Flooring and dividing large room in official residence at Lower Fort Garry.

I beg to enclose rough sketch of the proposed subdivision of the large room upstairs in the official residence and also an approximate estimate of the cost of the work, $165.00. The most delay will be in adjusting the beams on the old uneven floor, but I think that the two men now here should be able to finish the work in ten days. Arrangements are made to have the lathing and plastering done as soon as the partition frames are up. Had we not better adhere to the dotted line in room no. 3 on account of the necessary lighting? Kindly mention any alteration you may choose to make and the work will be done as you direct. I will go to Selkirk today and will be at the telephone at 4. p.m. to receive any instructions you may have to give in connection with the work. [In comparing the floor plan attached to the above letter with the division of the second floor during the Motor Country Club period, it appears quite evident that Stanger was referring to the area in the south end of the upstairs of the main house. The alterations were carried out as he proposed with only minor variations.] (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 4 June 1900, pp. 533-6, B.303/b/16.)

Rodk. McPherson, Plastering rooms in south end of Commissioner's residence. Patching old plaster. (HBCA, Accounts, 18 June 1900, p. 89, B.303/d/278.)

I will have the glass and crockery unpacked and put in the kitchen. I had all the windows closed when the rain began, and will have fires put on daily until you arrive.

I went to examine the house this morning and found that upstairs, at the chimneys, some wet had got in, with the exception of small wet spot in one or two

places the whole upstairs is dry. There is one small wet spot at chimney in room off dining room at wall. The new rooms are now about dry, that is the paint. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 7 July 1900, p. 561, B.303/b/16.)

Colin McKenzie
Laying 14 1/5 shingles
42 1/4 days painting
16 1/4 days at commissioner's house
Rodk. McKenzie
Laying 14 1/8 shingles
27 1/4 days painting etc.
14 1/4 days at commissioner's house
(HBCA, Accounts, November 1900, p. 107, B.303/d/272.)

Structure: 1901-11

Between 1901 and 1911, when the Hudson's Bay Company closed down its operations at Lower Fort Garry, the Big House continued to receive maintenance repairs. The veranda required frequent attention and on the interior of the house, kalsomining, painting and papering were undertaken almost annually.

In 1910, J. Braidwood, a Company inspector, made an extensive examination of all the buildings at the lower fort. From his report it was evident that quite elaborate repairs to the house would have to be undertaken. The building had settled significantly. The summer kitchen at the north end of the house would have to be replaced, the veranda rebuilt, the house braced, the chimneys cut off at the level of the roof, and the old nagging problem of inadequate drainage solved. Braidwood also recommended that inside plumbing be installed and that a dormer should be constructed above the stairs in the annex to supply more light and room at the top of the stairs. Many of the floors throughout both the house and the annex would have to be replaced.

It is unknown how many or when the repairs recommended by Braidwood were actually carried out. Some at least appear to have been undertaken. Mrs. Sequin (*née* Stanger), who lived in the house at the time, mentioned that a great deal of money was spent on repairs immediately before the fort closed in 1911. The dormer over the stairs in the annex was installed at this time, and many of the floors throughout the house possibly received an additional layer of flooring. Inside plumbing may also have been introduced.

Documentation: 1901-11

We will have the walks rolled, as directed and the roller forwarded to Winnipeg on Tuesday. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 12 April 1901, p. 742, B.303/b/16.)

The man sent here nearly finished the papering and painting and was to have commenced the kalsomining and painting in your house this week, but he has not returned from Winnipeg since that day. He appears to be a very competent workman, and would make a good job of the rooms in the south end.

The shingling has been commenced, and should be finished in about two weeks. That part between the houses that caused so much inconvenience by leaking has been repaired and did not leak any during the heavy rain today. (HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Copy Books of Letters, Stanger to Chipman, 4 June 1901, p. 40, B.303/b/17.)

Hauling stones and placing them.
(HBCA, Accounts, 31 July 1901, p. 137, B.303/d/278.)

Expenses of E. Ward painting at Commissioners residence. (HBCA, Accounts, 31 August 1902, p. 186, B.303/d/278.)

To J. McCorrister
18 days at verandah raising, repairing and painting
2 trips to Selkirk for verandah lumber
1 trip to St. Andrews for scaffolding.
(HBCA, Accounts, August 1903, p. 151, B.303/d/272.)

To Mr. Colin McKenzie for 1-1/2 days painting at 2.75 day at verandah. (HBCA, Accounts, 1903, p. 150, B.303/d/272.)

Repairs on Commissioner's House and grounds
Jas. McCorrister kalsomining 8 days 16.00
H. G. Birston repairing fence 8 days
(HBCA, Accounts, 31 May 1904, p. 262, B.303/d/278.)

[There are no extensive repairs mentioned in the accounts for the years 1905-11.]

The buildings at Lower Fort Garry have for some years required sundry annual repairs and their condition is now such that a special examination has been made, and submitted herewith is report on the several repairs and improvements neces-

sary to make the buildings mentioned wind and watertight and to render them safe and efficient . . . .

4. MAIN DWELLING HOUSE
ERECTED ABOUT 1830

This building is in a dilapidated condition and although small repairs have been made from time to time, the walls have so settled and the supports decayed to such an extent that, repairs are necessary for the protection of the property now rapidly increasing in value.

The cellars were examined and the various supports to be renewed and strengthened noted. The flooring in the main floor is completely worn and has settled with the building and the giving way of several supports. The flooring will require to be lifted when new supports are being placed in position and a new floor laid down in its place properly levelled.

There is a small lean-to on the North side of the main building which is in such disrepair as to be useless. It is recommended that this be torn down and a serviceable frame structure 16 x 20 put up in its place. The verandah which has been temporarily repaired annually requires to be re-built with the exception of the roof. The flooring, supports and pillars are worn and rotted, the whole structure being unsafe.

Two strong iron braces to run the full length of the building are required to strengthen the structure.

The causes of the settling of the walls of this building are:—

1. The weight caused by two heavy stone chimneys not in use which will require to be removed.

2. Inflow of water to the cellars without any means of draining it off, leaving the soil on which the foundations rest in such a moist condition as to cause the wall to settle. This is most apparent at the end where the rain water runs from the roof with no means of carrying it away.

The repairs to the supports, flooring etc. would not be fully efficient unless means are taken to drain off water and so prevent further settling of the walls.

To do this it is recommended that a drain be laid from the cellar to the river and that a large tank be placed in the cellar to receive all the water coming from the roof with an overflow pipe connected with the drain.

5. MANAGER'S DWELLING HOUSE
[Annex plus one room]

The flooring in two of the rooms requires to be relaid as the present ones are worn out.

To give more light and room at the head of the stairway, it is recommended that a small window be conveniently placed in the roof.

With the drain proposed in operation it will be well to install a pump in the kitchen of the manager's House, connected with a cellar cistern.

Following herewith is a detailed list of repairs and improvements required giving an estimate of cost of same.

ESTIMATED COST OF REPAIRS
AT LOWER FORT GARRY
MAIN DWELLING HOUSE

WALLS
Repair, Plaster and Tint walls — $12.
FLOORS &c
Repair and level joists, relay with new B.C. fir 1 x 4, flooring the front and back hall, Dining & Bedroom adjoining, Schoolroom, kitchen and Servants Dining Room — $328.
VERANDAH
Renew Verandah from roof down, including Posts, floor and supports from end to end but not to touch roof or shingles, Floors and Posts painted — $291.
LEAN-TO
Remove old lean-to and shed outside present kitchen, and build new summer kitchen 16 x 20 8 to 12, lean-to roof, frame built shiplap and siding on Cedar posts, shingle roof, plaster inside new walls, metallic ceiling painted — $435.40
CHIMNEYS
Remove two chimneys level with roof, repair shingles — $50.
SEWERS &c
Excavate below frost line and lay 8 inch sewer pipe from house to 10 feet in river — $500.
W.C. & PIPES
Install W.C. in back room, sink in kitchen, sink upstairs, pipes and fittings — $250.
one only pump to kitchen sink — $20.
CISTERNS IN BASEMENT
Erect three only galvanized iron cisterns with covers and manholes, taps and overflow to drain — $350.
MANAGER'S RESIDENCE [annex]
Install one only W.C., one only sink, force Pump, pipes, lead or copper lined cistern in roof, and overflow waste pipes etc. — $230.
FLOORS &c
Relay floor of kitchen and large bedroom upstairs, new sash, bedroom and kitchen, Dormer window head of staircase — $97.50

(HBCA, Stores Correspondence, Case No. 5, Lower Fort Garry, 1910, Report of J. Braidwood, 14 January 1910, 518/1.)

Structure: 1913-51

In 1913, the Motor Country Club of Winnipeg leased the fort and grounds of Lower Fort Garry from the Hudson's Bay Company. The Big House was used as the clubhouse and as such accommodated the bar, dining room, some changing rooms and staff quarters.

Many changes were made to the structure in the 50 years of occupation. A new veranda, wider and more substantial than the original, was added to the front and south end of the building, and at the north end a new kitchen was constructed. A rear veranda was added connecting the link with the rear entrance to the building. Inside, plumbing fixtures and bathrooms were installed to give an increased capacity to accommodate the club. A number of other changes were made to make the house more suitable for the club's activities.

The building was beginning to suffer badly from old age. The repairs carried out in annual maintenance became more and more frequent. The problem of settling, especially in the southwest corner, required constant attention. The auxiliary posts in the basement were changed and supplemented. New floors were laid over the old and the roof was reshingled. The plaster on the main floor was patched frequently. The alterations of the Motor Country Club were numerous; but it is to the club's credit that it maintained the building in a reasonably good condition at a time when old age was bringing rapid decline.

Documentation: 1913-51

Lean-to (link between the two main buildings). We intend replacing and extending it to cover the rear entrance of the club building floor in Mr. Mitchell's part [annex] is so uneven we intend laying a hard wood floor on top of the present one. (HBC Land Department Files, Winnipeg, 4 April 1914. All documentation in this section is from the source given above, save one, which will be noted. Only the date will be given.)

Company consents to building of new verandah. (9 May 1917.)

- To put up new verandah
- paint tables, chairs, sash, back verandah
- repairing wall paper
- shelving in kitchen
- repairing doors, refitting screens. (31 May 1917.)

- roof leaking so that the water has softened ground under foundations at the rear of the sitting room, next to entry between sitting room and ball room.
- floor uneven. (12 October 1920.)
- ground floor west and north elevations of the proposed new kitchen and verandah extension approved.
- Approval given for the removal of the wooden partition between the two small dining rooms off the present main dining room on the understanding that the removal of this partition will not take away any necessary support to the ceiling. (14 March 1923.)
- repairs required to the stairs and floor
- one door in the wall is not required and a couple of windows together with this door can advantageously be boarded up and closed. (15 May 1925.)

Big House: rapid settling of the walls between the sitting room and ball room of the club house in that some of the cracks in the walls are opening quickly. (15 July 1925.)

Big House inspected: the following repairs are necessary

- replace seven footings and install seven supporting wooden posts and necessary sill above to support the ground floor
- repair lath and plaster after above
- examine curved floor at foot of basement stairs – bulged
- repair floor where necessary in pantry and dining room
- repair leaks in roof. (8 July 1927.)

Andrews and son – building contractors to do following:

1) remove three beams 8" x 8" x 16' and 7 posts 8" x 8" x 7' and replace with B.C. fir timber same to be set on concrete footings.

2) replace all lath and plaster broken when beams are removed – also repair two patches now broken.

3) repair dormers etc.

4) remove raised floor at foot of basement stair and install solid concrete floor. (15 July 1927.)

small fire in the sitting room caused igniting of some wood trimming around the concrete hearth.

M.C.C. to install an electric fireplace. (10 July 1928.)

Fireplace in the ball room has pushed away from the wall. (28 August 1930.)

1931 Estimate for repairs.

- water seeping into basement from a south west direction.
- result has caused a bad settlement
- the posts supporting the building where this settlement is taking place show bad signs of dry rot
- dig trench and lay weeping tile
- rebuild areas on south side and fill in all defects of wall and stucco around windows
- interior of the basement at the foot of the stairway
- Dig out and underpin the left hand side of doorway and fill in with concrete
- door on ground floor leading to hall leading to dance floor: jack up and straighten head and jack up and straighten the stairway below it.
- rear of bar room: fill in holes level off accumulation of loose earth
- Dig out the wooden posts which carry the beams and put in cement footings.
- build up the window now falling out
- open up areas at points detailed and place wood gratings under porch
- erect posts and beams in basement independent of structure and install new joists where necessary.
- rear of bar room: ventilate, level earth, and cut down posts and place proper sill under.

The club opened up the fireplaces at the right and left of the basement stairs which will greatly improve the ventilation.... In the right hand room a tyndall stone floor has been laid making this room available for afternoon teas and light lunches (has not done anything about the W. Wall).... The club has also with your consent hung the penitentiary door on the opening leading from the basement corridor to the right hand room referred to. (6 April 1931.)

4) install two areaways and windows as specified.
5) remove garden service pipe and provide ventilation from under verandah into the building.
6) install extra joists supported by auxiliary posts and beams. (11 July 1931.)

main building basement some earth piled in the west room and this accumulation of earth will tend to rot the posts at the base. M.C.C. The piling of the earth in the west room of the main building basement — when work of improving the basement room to the right at the foot of the stairs was done last spring the earth was to be removed. M.C.C. says that the earth was there before the club took possession. (16 June 1931.)

The light fixtures which hung in the Big House during the occupancy of the M.C.C. were actually made from two in the historical exhibit of the H.B.C. (4 April 1931.)

The roof to be reshingled with cedar shingles. (6 April 1931.)

In the main entrance hall is an old oil lamp of the weighted pulley type. It was located by accident in a stable loft at Little Britain where it had been stored for many years by Alfred Franks, a former employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. (*The Winnipeg Evening Tribune*, 16 May 1931, Magazine section.)

- front verandah settling badly
- usual sinking of the wall around the doorway between the lounge room and the ballroom. (1 June 1935.)

Inspection of the house by Chivers:
South west corner settling in the wall by the doorway to the lounge.

- recommends boring into ground with an auger to depth of 6' and filling with concrete. On top of this foundation place 4" x 6" oak posts and then on top of these posts over the bar doorway 4 x 6 beam on the interior, the purpose of this being to carry the load of the cross beams supporting the ground floor. These cross beams project into the wall and he considers that the transferring of loads on these beams to the new foundations will prevent further settlement. (12 October 1935.)

West wall repairs do not seem to be standing up — cracks appearing. (15 June 1936.)

laying of water pipes from Club House to laundry. (13 March 1936.)

roof poor — should be reshingled. (3 July 1940.)

reshingling of the Big House/ south and east sides of roof. (August 1942.)

Club laid asphalt walk from Big House to circular driveway (east). (16 May 1947.)

Bad settlement in N.W. Corner of the kitchen in Big House — the cedar piles rotted out. (16 June 1947.)

Moody & Moore arrive with John Miller & Son to install a series of concrete

surface footings under the internal beams and also at the exterior walls. Jack floor, level same, install new wood posts from the existing beam system to the new concrete footings, will also be advised to ensure even support of kitchen area. (16 July 1948.)

New showers etc. installed; new men's wash room; new golfers dressing room. (31 March 1948.)

Rear verandah slipping away from the Big House. (1 June 1948.)

new kitchen foundation. (28 November 1949.)

various repairs to north kitchen wing and to the rear verandah. (1950.)

Structure: 1951-65

When the lower fort was given to the federal government in 1951, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development undertook annual maintenance although the Motor Country Club continued to lease the fort grounds and buildings. Apart from the frequent repairs which were made necessary by the old age of the house, the department carried out two rather extensive and destructive alterations. In the basement, the existing floors, which do not appear to have been original, were removed, some earth excavated and a concrete slab poured. Unfortunately, this removed any evidence which may have survived of earlier flooring. During the restoration of the house, Mr. Paul Rudko, the contractor who undertook the repairs, was interviewed and as much information as he could recall was collected and used in designing the floors in the restoration. The department also replaced the flooring in the west half of the first floor of the main house, installing new joists at the same time. This also removed valuable information which would have been used in the restoration. Mr. Rudko, who also carried out this work, could remember little concerning the original markings. The replacement floor and joists were retained in the restoration for the joists were hidden from view by the board ceiling in the basement and the flooring at ground level.

Documentation: 1951 to Restoration

Replaced boxed-in steps at the south east corner of the residence and painted steps, repaired main steps, installed two hand rails and painted them, repaired pillars under main verandah patched and plastered walls at the bottom of basement stairway, repaired and relined coal shute, repaired doors, replaced lights in windows, repaired hand rails and stairs to basement, repaired walls in beverage room, put two beams in main well, painted eavestroughing and conductor pipes at rear of building. (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, National Parks Correspondence Files, 7 October 1954.)

Proposed for the fiscal year 1957-8

1) A concrete floor in the basement of the clubhouse building. It is considered that the floor should cover the entire area within the foundation walls of the building with the possible exception of the tavern room. This room is excepted on the provision that the floor of this area is in reasonably good shape. The floor should be placed at an elevation to provide normal head room. It is considered that the foundation walls are to a depth in excess of the proposed floor slab. If not, the possibility of underpinning these walls should be examined and estimated. A sump pump is required. (Ibid., 20 July 1956.)

Proposed for the estimates 1957-8

1) Concrete floor in basement of the Factor's residence of clubhouse building. We have measured the entire area within the foundation walls with the exception of the tavern rooms which only require minor repair work in two small spots. Placing a 5" concrete slab will require 25 yds. of floor slab, and weeping tile around the two main sections for drainage to a sump pit or the present sewage system. To provide head room of 6' it will be necessary to excavate to a depth of 12" to 15" over the full area. This will be the expensive part of the work as there is only one small window from which the earth can be removed from the basement and the earth will have to be handled three times and hauled away and dumped outside the Fort. The foundation walls are below the floor slab and in my opinion it will not be necessary to consider underpinning the walls. I estimate that with 5" concrete slab it will require 25 yds. concrete, 25 yds. crushed stone or gravel 5" thick, 300 lineal feet 4" weeping tile, earth excavation 12" to 15" and I estimate it will cost $1400.00 to do this work. (Ibid., 28 July 1956.)

Wilkin's Report, 19 December 1956

Factor's Residence

This building has a long history of alterations and additions . . . . Generally speaking the building is in good structural

condition apart from the west wing which is not so good, although there is quite a lot of work required to be done to keep water out of various places.

West Verandah. Entering the building on the west side there is a small verandah built with a timber floor and glazed walls. The floor has settled through a supporting beams having rotted through exposure to damp, work is in hand repairing the beam and posts under this verandah using treated lumber. The beams should be boxed in from the outside and the path sloped away from the building to keep the water out.

Verandah. The basement stairs which lead from this verandah are not straight having settled a little bit with the main stone wall of the house at this place. The timber floor of the small lobby at the bottom of the stairs alsc slopes because of this settlement, but this is not uncommon in buildings such as this, and I do not think that anything need be done about it. The only thing that can be done about the wall is to excavate down to the footings in order to inspect their soundness and decide whether they require underpinning.

The room to the right from the lobby is a bar which has a stone floor. There are three small windows in this room which let in a lot of water in spring. The water drains across the stone floor out into the lobby where it goes underneath the wooden floor then across into the other bar on the other side of the lobby and under the wood floor in this room as well. The water amounts to several inches each year, the caretaker's remedy, so he tells me, is to take up a few floor boards in the bar, dig out a pit in the dirt sub-floor and put in a sump pump to get rid of the water. This is hardly a satisfactory arrangement, and first of all the water should be prevented from getting into the basement, then the underside of the timber floors ought to be inspected to see what condition they are in after this sort of treatment over a number of years. Whatever their condition, the safest thing to do would be to replace timber floors with stone flags to avoid future maintenance cost due to rising damp – stone being suggested in preference to concrete for its better appearance (and in preference to timber in order to save a good deal of excavation).

The water gets in round the window frames as the concrete light wells outside the building below grade are not properly drained nor are the floors of the wells far enough below the level of the window sills. Therefore the floors of the wells should be lowered and small pipes put into each of them to drain the water away to a soak pit.

The stone walls and stone flag floor in the room to the right of the lobby are all in good condition.

Where the ends of the wood ground floor joists in this room are built into the outside walls there are signs of rotting with consequent loss in strength through damp penetrating the wall and soaking into the timbers. This problem is encountered in quite a number of the buildings in the Fort and is quite serious. Eventually the ends of the joists will rot away until finally the joist will fail. As in most cases the joists are of very heavy timbers (in this room they are 6" x 8" oak) and the deterioration is very slow the life of the floors is comparatively long – these joists have been in position now for about 120 years and will last for a good many years to come, but the condition does exist and if possible some way of keeping the joists dry should be found. At the moment I know of no way in which this can be done but I hope to find an answer after making some enquiries.

The coal cellar is situated behind the fireplace being partitioned off from the rest of the room. It is in a very rough condition as is the adjacent space under the verandah and the rubbish needs to be cleaned out, the main partition requires re-fixing and re-plastering, and the floors cementing.

The second bar on the other side of the lobby has a timber floor which should be opened up and inspected for soundness. No water actually enters through the windows in this room as they are all under the verandah. No repair work is required in this room apart from filling some small cracks in the stone fireplace. The wood joists in the floor above show no signs of rot.

The rest of the basement space is entered from this bar, and is divided lengthways down the centre by a stone wall, the right hand side is further divided by wood partitions into small rooms. The first two are used as locker rooms, have a concrete floor. Walls (as far as may be seen) and ceiling timbers are in good condition. The remainder of the basement, except a small area on which the water tanks stand, has a dirt floor which is susceptible to rising damp causing deterioration to the woodwork. All of this area requires a new concrete floor laid on gravel after sufficient excavation has been made to allow a reasonable head

room over the new floor. A sump pump is required and should be located close to the water tanks with the discharge led to a soakaway south of the building.

The stone walls throughout this part of the basement are in good condition requiring no repair work at present. The joists in the ground floor exposed in the basement on both sides of the centre wall have been affected by the damp and the outer wood is rotted. This should be scraped off until sound wood is reached and should then be treated with wood preservative. Where the joist has rotted too far it should be taken out and replaced.

The wood lintels over the two windows in the right hand side of the basement are in bad condition and should be replaced.

Even when the concrete floor is laid in this section there will still be damp from the condensation on the water tanks and pipe runs, so I think it would be advisable to install a small mechanical ventilator to provide a continuous movement of air. Alternatively a small heating unit could be installed but this would mean that the space could not be used as a cold store as it is at the moment and ventilation is still required, otherwise ideal conditions for dry rot are created – (there are no signs of dry rot in the Fort at the moment).

The left hand side of the basement is used as a gardeners store for bulbs, plants and for vegetables. The lintel of one of the two windows in bad condition and needs replacing. Three of the timber posts have rotted and need replacement.

At one end of the room there is the stone base of an old oven which can be taken out.

There is a sump in this part which drains across the basement and into the drainage system. This should be left in when the concrete floor is laid.

Ground Floor. The ground floor of the building houses the main rooms of the Country Club which have been kept in good state of repair and decoration so that little work is required.

The verandah extends the full length of the building on the south side and about half way along the west side. Structurally it is quite sound, all the timber in floors, walls being in good condition with no signs of rot or leaking. The roof has two rafters which failed last winter with an exceptional snow load. They have been repaired with a plywood splice but should be replaced. The roof rafters are 6" x 2" at 20 inch centres and they have a clear span of 12 ft. 6 inches. They are therefore too small to take a normal roof loading and should be strengthened. This can be done by introducing a purlin at mid span supporting it with braces every 10 feet.

The appearance of the verandah has altered radically since the time it was built, it originally having no glazing to the walls, the doors were different and space beneath the floor was open.

The door from the verandah to the main building leads into a small lobby. The floor of which slopes but is not loose. This has been caused by settlement to the same stone wall which caused the basement stairs to dip to one side. The floor cannot be inspected from the underside as a plaster board ceiling has been built in the basement. Part of this should be opened up for a closer inspection. The amount of settlement in the doorway into the dining room has been rather exaggerated, it is the lintel in this case which has sagged rather than the floor. It could be repaired by putting in a new lintel but I imagine it is being left as a feature.

The only work required in the big room on the ground floor of the north wing is to take down the fireplace brickwork, rebuild, plaster and paint it.

The corner fireplace in the room in the south side is a dreadful thing of plaster and stone which could well be taken out and something more in the style of the other fireplaces built.

The doorframe on the doorway between the main hall and the small lobby on the west side needs re-fixing.

The living quarters and kitchens, the latter built in 1922, require no maintenance work at the present time.

There are two old wood stoves in good condition in this part of the building which are not in use and which could be put either in the museum or the restored fur store. One of them is built into a position between two bedrooms, half of the stove in each room, the other is standing on the verandah.

Second Floor. The second floor of the main building is divided into bedrooms occupied in the summer by the female staff. There are nine rooms and a suite of bathrooms and lavatories. Repair work is confined to small plaster patches and cracks in most of the rooms, and a general check on all the roof flashings round chimneys and dormers as there are signs of leaks in these places, the only bad leak being through the stonework of the chimney into the bathroom where the plaster is bad, and one bedroom. The flashings will probably need re-newing

and the chimney capping made good with cement mortar.

The provision of fire escape is not good and I doubt if it conforms to the by-laws. There is one escape rope from a dormer window on the north side in addition to the central staircase; the other dormers open above the sloping roof of the verandah but this can hardly be classed as an escape exit.

The main roof timbers and shingle covering are in sound condition.

The north wing of the building houses the male staff on the first floor with an entrance into a small lobby from the outside on the ground floor. This part of the building is not in good condition and the floor in the small entrance should be taken up and re-laid as it slopes badly and is loose in places. The staircase also slopes dangerously and should be taken out and re-built completely. When the new staircase is designed, more space should be given to it if possible as the present one is far too steep. The plaster work is in poor condition and most of it will have to be taken off and re-done.

The upper floor of the wing containing three bedrooms and bathroom is just as bad and there is plenty of work to be done.

The floor on the landing and corridor need to be opened up and the joists either levelled and re-fixed or replaced. The floors in the rooms are sound.

Damp is entering down the stonework of the chimney which probably needs re-capping and re-flashing, and the plaster on the chimney should be taken off and re-done. Plaster patching in the rooms is required and the dormer roof and sill flashings should be checked.

The ceilings and walls (which are wood panelled) are quite sound.

The remarks about fire escape apply to this part of the building as there is only a rope secured to a roof member and led out of a dormer window as a secondary means of exit.

The oil stove in one of the bedrooms with its flue going into the stone chimney looks quite a fire hazard and the walls and ceiling near to it should be lined with asbestos board.

The electric wiring should be examined by an electrician as it looks dangerous to me and a new installation is probably required.

The roof space is inaccessible and cannot be examined without opening a section of the ceiling.

Exterior. The outside of the factor's residence present an attractive and well kept appearance. The paint work and stucco is well maintained and the roof coverings are in good condition.

The main part of the building has solid limestone walls which were not stuccoed originally. The walls of the west wing are constructed with timber posts and beams with stone infilling similar to the R.N.W.M.P. building. The kitchen addition on the north side is of timber frame construction. One patch of stucco on the north wall near the kitchen door is loose and should be hacked back to a firm edge and re-stuccoed.

The west wing has too much ivy growing on it, quite a lot of which could be cut down to prevent it damaging the stucco or roof shingles.

There were no dormer windows in the original buildings, the upper floors being lit by sky-lights.

Excavation work has started in the basement of the Factor's residence and . . . I suggest that after excavation has been completed we place a 5" subfloor of gravel with weeping tile placed around the walls of the two basement sections with a catchbasin in the east section and two catchbasins in the west section leading to the existing sewer in the south end of the west section of the basement and then the placing of 5" concrete floor over the full area. (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, National Parks Correspondence Files, 25 February 1957.)

Big House: north wing
- ground floor, take up floor and relay
- build in new staircase
- 1st floor – replace landing joists and boards, flashing and capping to chimney and dormers
- replaster throughout as necessary
- discussion later of failing beams. (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, National Parks Correspondence Files,1958-9,Proposed Estimates.)

- replacement of six main floor beams
- replacement of floor in basement of Factor's residence and repairs to the main floor. (Ibid., 1958-59, Repairs done in Big House.)

Examination of the work proposed on the floor of the basement bar room in the Factor's Residence shows this floor to have been supported on now decayed wooden sills on wet earth with no chance of ventilation. We have been thinking of replacing the floor as it was and using treated sills but I now suggest it would be

better to pour a concrete slab on a gravel base. The concrete slab would have to be covered with a wooden floor for the sake of authenticity but drainage can be provided in the gravel base and this type of construction would be more permanent and satisfactory. There has been flooding in this area by surface water in the spring and we propose to do some work to tighten up and drain window wells to help prevent this. (Ibid., 10 March 1959.)

Specification for the replacement of the floor in the Bar room. Removing present rotted flooring and floor joists, doing necessary excavation work, placing 3" layer gravel under 6" concrete slab, placing 2" x 3" sleeper imbedded in concrete so that the new floor can be nailed to them. Supplying all labour and materials with the exception 1 x 4" fir flooring which has already been purchased and would be used. Laying new floor staining and oiling, placing drainage tile, catch basin and sump connected to main sewage system.
Hall: supply all labour and materials purchase of additional 1 x 4" fir flooring and other materials required completed similar to above and disposal of rotted materials from basement. (Ibid., 1 April 1959.)

Renewal of the floor 1st floor, west side: specification
- Supplying all materials and labour for repair work to west half of the main floor of the Factor's residence including removal and replacement of existing floors with new 6 x 8" floor beams spaced 4' centres sub floor 2 x 6" tongue and groove fir and 1 x 4" flooring. Floor to be levelled and floor beams imbedded 10" in west and centre main masonry walls. Partition walls on main floor to be fitted to new floor. Any damage . . . responsibility of contractor. (Ibid., 7 October 1959.)

Replacement of main floor west side:
Completed: the major repair job of replacing the main floor in the west half of the Factor's residence. This floor was completely removed and new floor beams sub-flooring and flooring put in. The main floor and floor beams had rotted and sloped six inches to the west main wall, the levelling of the floor necessitated the changing of the wash basins and toilets in the Ladies wash room, plumbing in the kitchen and new electrical outlets in the rooms. This was rather a ticklish job as the partition walls in the various rooms had to be supported when the main floor and supports were completely removed, however, all work was completed with a minimum of disturbance. (Ibid., 11 January 1960.)

When the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company amalgamated in 1821, the Red River Settlement took on a new importance. With amalgamation there was a sudden surplus of posts and personnel which had swelled beyond all reasonable bounds in the last bitter years of rivalry. Post faced post on the rivers of the West; and one of the first tasks of George Simpson, the Governor of the Northern Department, was to rationalize the system – to cut back the numbers of traders and posts in the Company's vast domains. The settlement would be used to accommodate the retiring servants made surplus by the union. The Company provided travel expenses to the forks of the Red and Assiniboine, gave grants of land and provided subsistence for the first period of settling in. The pattern set in the early years continued through the history of the settlement; old servants often took their leave of the Company and established themselves there in comfortable retirement.

The settlement also assumed a more vital role in the supply of the Company. The provisioning of the trade had always been a problem both for the old Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. The settlement offered an alternative to the hauling of bulky staple goods over the long and difficult transportation routes. Some use of the buffalo hunt had been made before 1821, but after union a calculated programme was set in motion whereby it was hoped that the settlement would become the breadbasket of the fur trade. Cultivation and husbandry were both encouraged by the Governor and Committee which supplied stock and seeds and promised that the

Company would undertake to purchase any produce which the settlers had to offer.

At the time of the union, the operations of the Company were located at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers in Fort Garry. The administration of the colony, in the hands of the Governor of Assiniboia, was at first centred in Fort Douglas. But in 1825, when the two functions were assumed by Chief Factor Donald McKenzie, Fort Garry combined both the administration of the colony and the fur trade in the lower Red River district. The fort was old and quite dilapidated, a remnant of the years of rivalry. In 1826, it was very nearly carried away with the flood which inundated the entire area around the forks. The buildings of the fort remained standing, but were even more dilapidated and it became apparent that the increasingly important post in Red River would require renewal.

George Simpson, appointed Governor of the Northern Department at the time of the union,[1] took a personal interest in the development of the settlement, and kept a careful watch on the administration of both civil and Company affairs. They required careful surveillance. The years of rivalry had been difficult for the original settlers; not all of them had even been of a type suited for the rigours of breaking new land let alone the harassment of the traders of the North West Company. Servants of the two companies who had been retired involuntarily harboured malice toward the new Company in spite of its efforts to have them provided for in the settlement. The Métis resented the presence of both the settlers and the Company. There was, therefore, a considerable dissatisfaction in the colony which smoldered not too far under the surface. The situation was not relieved in the early years by a personal and jurisdictional dispute between the local chief factor of the Company in the settlement and the Governor of Assiniboia over the control of the free trade in furs, a problem which would plague the Company throughout the 19th century. The traders, many of them operating from Red River, threatened the Company's monopoly not only in the settlement but throughout the Company's vast empire, for free trade was contagious and spread very readily. The free traders were scotched in the early 1820s but the threat lingered to rise up periodically. Simpson looked about for alternative forms of economic activity for the settlers and landed upon a number of schemes which never seemed to succeed to the extent of his expectations. All in all, the settlement required a disproportionate amount of his time and attention.

Simpson's duties in the fur trade alone were onerous enough to demand all of his energies. The years immediately after union in 1821 were spent in constant travel from one end of the fur trade to the other, settling the confused affairs of the Company. In the season 1823-24, however, Simpson spent eight months in Red River restoring order to the troubled colony; and there is some indication that Simpson himself wanted to settle down to a less hectic way of life. In 1824, he requested leave to visit England for the purpose of searching for a wife. But this was discouraged by Andrew Colvile who felt that he should visit the Columbia district before so encumbering himself. Simpson travelled there in 1824-25 and then proceeded to England in the fall, presumably to settle the question of matrimony. He left three months later not with a wife but with the added responsibility of the governorship of the Southern Department.[2]

Simpson spent the next three years travelling in his wide domain, especially in his new charge, the Southern Department. But in the late fall of 1829, he again set off for England, this time more determined to return with a female companion. With him came John George McTavish and James McMillan with similar intentions. All three were rewarded in their energetic hunt for wives. After at least one false start, Simpson successfully courted his eighteen-year-old cousin, Frances Ramsay Simpson, the daughter of Geddes Mackenzie Simpson. In January he wrote of his plans to John George McTavish who had ventured to Scotland in his search for a bride.

When I left London for Scotland, it was settled that I should return to England next year fall for the purpose of getting married but on my arrival the other Day I pressed our immediate union so warmly & seriously that the Father & Mother gave way; with the Lady, I had little difficulty as she was as anxious about it as myself – I must await your & McMillan's arrival to get spliced; the Lady understands that she is to have the happiness of Mrs. McTavish & Mrs. McMillans Society during the passage: we proceed from Montreal p. canoe. touch at Red River in going, she accompanies me to York and in the autumn to Red River where we shall pass the winter; we take a maid servant from

here with us and a man & maid servant, go by the ship to join us wt. our heavy Baggage at York. You now have all my plans.[3]

The two were married 24 February 1830, and together with John George McTavish and his wife, a Miss Turner of Turner Hall in Aberdeenshire, they made their way by ship to Canada. The long ocean voyage cemented a friendship which would last as long as the four were in Canada.

As Simpson had planned in the previous January, they travelled to the interior by canoe from Canada. The party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. McTavish and maid servant, and Mr. and Mrs. Simpson and servant, set off from Lachine, 2 May 1830, and turned up the Ottawa for the long trip inland.[4] At Fort William, the McTavishs parted from the others to strike out for Moose Factory. Their place in the canoes was taken by Thomas Simpson, Frances Simpson's cousin, who was assigned to serve as secretary for George Simpson. He travelled with them as far as Lake Winnipeg and then went separately to Norway House where he was joined later by the Simpsons. They continued to Red River where they arrived on 6 June.

During their short stay in the settlement, Simpson made tentative arrangements for their accommodation in Red River where they planned to spend at least one winter, and probably selected a house near the forks. Later in July, Simpson wrote to Donald McKenzie informing him that Pierre Leblanc would soon arrive to repair a house for their occupancy.[5] But McKenzie must have complained of the existing Company establishment at the upper fort. The facilities had not been extensively repaired after the great flood of 1826 and with the Company's affairs increasing in importance there, a new establishment was felt to be in order. Simpson may also have had an eye to his own occupancy at the Red River Settlement for he appears to have pushed the construction of the new fort, and proposed an establishment significant in size and construction. When the Simpsons departed for the meeting of the Northern Council at York Factory, they were accompanied by the officers of the Company from Fort Garry who would help in the selection of a location for a new fort farther down the Red.

11th [June] *Left Fort Garry at 1/2 past 6 A.M. accompanied by another Canoe, in which were Messrs. McKenzie & Finlayson and arrived at 9 O'clock at Mr. Cocrane's, where we were met by Dr. Todd & Mr. Rea* [Rae] *who had travelled across the Plains on horseback. After breakfasting with Mrs. Cocrane, we proceeded to examine the ground for the site of a New Establishment,* [Lower Fort Garry] *about to be built at this end of the Settlement, and Mr. Simpson having selected a beautiful spot on a gentle elevation, surrounded by Wood, and commanding a fine view of the River, we took leave of Messrs. McKenzie & Cocrane, and continued our march.*[6]

The Simpsons continued on their way to York, stopping at Norway House where they were joined by Thomas Simpson and other officers of the Company who were also on their way to the meeting. After a stay of one week, they continued on their journey arriving at the Factory at midnight, 26 June.

The Council sessions were always hectic times. This was the one occasion in the year when many of the senior officers of the Company gathered together. They submitted the reports for their districts, their accounts and their journals, and communicated verbally the happenings in their districts for the year. The Council was of course the main focus of activity for here the senior officers fleshed out the Company's operations in the Northern Department for the following year. Among other resolutions the Council recommended in 1830 that a new establishment be constructed in the Red River:

The Establishment of Fort Garry being in a very dilapidated state, its situation not sufficiently centrical, much exposed to spring floods, and very inconvenient in regard to navigation of the river and in other points of view, it is resolved

51. That a new establishment to bear the same name be formed on a site to be selected near the lower end of the Rapids for which purposes tradesmen be employed or the work done by contract as may be found most expedient, and as stone and lime are on the spot those materials to be used instead of timber being cheaper and more durable.[7]

In addition to the meetings of the Council, Simpson was caught up in the whirl of social activities connected with the gathering and busy with his voluminous correspondence which was even heavier than usual at Council time. While Simpson was engrossed in the affairs of the Company, Frances was squired about by the gentlemen "who offer to a stranger, the most cordial, and unaffected welcome, and endeavour to make everything pleasing & agreeable."[8]

Late in August, the Simpsons left York Factory for the Red River Settlement. By this time Leblanc probably had their house at the forks renovated, and they settled in for the long Red River winter. The first months were pleasant enough – as late as December the weather was "uncommonly fine" with "no snow, little frost & the river not yet all fast"[9] – and Frances injected a new gracious element into Red River society. James McMillan reported the state of affairs to Hargrave in December: "The Governor has given two grand let outs, at which the Blues and Clergy were very conspicuous. . . . Mrs. Simpson's presence here makes a change in us. Even Donald himself is obliged to throw off his Kilmornoths [?] in order to look spry. . . ."[10] And the Simpson home soon became the centre of social activity; Alexander Ross looked forward with a great deal of anticipation to the Christmas festive season at the Governor's house:

The gay time has not yet commenced & in the interim we are all gaping for the arrival of some half dozen of the great wigs who are expected to pass their holy days with his excellency which together with the fascinating accomplishments of Mrs. Simpson will give the place an air of high life & gaiety. We have already no few attractions, the painted house of state, the Pianoforte, & the new fashioned Government Carriole are objects to attract & amuse. There is now & then a select party up at Govt. House: on such occasions the Gov' & his Lady are extremely affable – behold, what will it be when the possy arrives?[11]

But the Simpsons soon tired of the narrow, confined Red River society. Simpson himself could never rest content in one location for any length of time regardless of the surroundings and Frances probably could not avoid making comparisons with the way of life she had so recently left in England. Both soon longed to be away from the settlement and with their friends the McTavishs at Moose. Shortly after the hectic and demanding festive season Simpson wrote to McTavish bemoaning their fate:

I wish from the bottom of my Heart we were situated near each other and my wife re-echoes this with every day of her life. We have thousands of Society but none that we care much about. Donald & I are very good friends but not over thick; his wife a poor stupid good creature, but there is nothing in her. The Parson's wife is passable but she is 3 miles distant and we see little of her & Cockran's wife has been a "Dollymoss" or some such thing who can pray & cook & look demure. . . . But if our better halves were near each other they would both keep themselves & us alive. I really have serious thoughts of passing next or the following winter with you at Moose – Say how you could accommodate us the following winter–[12]

And added soon to the boredom of Red River society was the constant sickness of Frances and occasional discomforts of Simpson. One week later he continued his letter to McTavish noting that both he and his wife were ill. "Pray write," he implored McTavish, "and frequently, fully & confidentially. I wish from the bottom of my heart we were near each other as neither myself nor my wife are quite at home here."[13]

Frances was pregnant; and for the next nine months she was scarcely ever out of bed, so miserable were her months of child-bearing. The illness hung over the two, and made their first year in the settlement an ordeal. At the end of the long winter, Simpson reported to McTavish that Frances had "been a great sufferer this Winter. . . .for weeks together confined to Bed,"[14] and repeated his request of the previous fall that the two families get together at Moose.

I am most heartily tired of Red River or rather of its good inhabitants, and should be delighted to join you at Moose next fall, indeed my better half is constantly entreating me to take her there, so that she may enjoy the society of her friend to whom she is most warmly attached – Here she has formed no intimacies.[15]

Frances' illness also dampened the burgeoning social life of the settlement. Although the Simpsons still entertained, there was not the gaiety of the late fall, and observers such as John Stuart privately worried that her ill-health might force the Simpsons to leave the settlement: *I made several visits to Red River and every successive trip was more pleasant than the preceding on every occasion my reception both with the Governor and his Lady and indeed with every Individual composing the establishment of Fort Garry was then in the extreme far beyond my merit or any thing I could expect – unfortunately, Mrs. Simpson is not well she has been ailing since Christmas and though her disease is not by the Doctor considered dangerous I strongly apprehend that the climate of this country will*

not agree with her and that her stay cannot be much prolonged – this of course if it happens, will also draw the Governor away and I know not a greater misfortune that could befall Red River.[16]

The lack of companionship was overcome somewhat by the arrival in the settlement of Thomas Simpson, Frances' cousin who came overland from York Factory in March. He acted as secretary for George Simpson and provided a companion for Frances. Little could be done for her illness however; in May, in spite of the better weather, it still lingered on. Simpson wrote worriedly to McTavish, "Mrs. Simpson still continues a quiet invalid, the greater part of her time in Bed and her symptoms by no means favourable."[17] Only after a great deal of hesitation did Simpson leave to go to York Factory for the meeting of the Northern Council in July. His wife's illness was beginning to have a wearing effect on Simpson's own health and outlook; the fatigue was evident in a letter to McTavish from York:

I left my poor better half in /I am afraid/ a dangerous state at Red River. Dr. Tod is in constant attendance upon her and I am more miserable about her than words can tell; if any evil should happen I shall be the most wretched man in existence as my whole heart & Soul are bound up in her.[18]

While at York, Simpson finally reported to the Governor and Committee concerning the construction of Lower Fort Garry.[19] Construction on the fort had begun in the previous fall when the first excavations had been made.[20] And in the following spring the building was taken up as soon as weather permitted. In April, Simpson wrote to McTavish describing the work:

We are building at the Rapids, which is the highest & best situation on the River, the materials stone & lime & if the plan I have begun be followed up it will be a respectable & comfortable Establish[t]*. I don't expect to occupy it, as it will not be habitable until the fall of 1833. – Leblanc conducts the work and the McKenzie River men & recruits of last fall are the labourers. I must pass another winter here probably two if you cannot make room for me at Moose, but if you can, I should like to join you in the Fall of 1832.*[21]

In his report to the Governor and Committee, however, Simpson was more optimistic citing "next Spring" as the date of occupancy:

I had the satisfaction of seeing the Walls of the principal building nearly up before my departure, [for York Factory] *and hope to see New Fort Garry (the only stone and lime and I may add the most respectable looking Establishment in the Indian Country) occupied next Spring.*[22]

But even on the most optimistic of reckonings, the fort would not be finished until sometime in 1832, and until then the Company's operations and the Simpson residence would continue to be located at the forks.

When Simpson returned from York Factory he found Mrs. Simpson in much the same condition as she had been before his departure:

Found Mrs. Simpson in nearly the same state as I left her w. the exception of encreased bulk; she has had a most trying time of it and I fear her confinement will bear very heavily on her delicate frame.[23]

And her confinement proved to be as painful as Simpson had predicted; the birth of their boy in the late fall almost cost her her life. Simpson reported to McTavish, "My poor wife had the most narrow escape imaginable."

During the whole 9 months previous to her confinement she was in extreme ill health and so much reduced & weakened that at the crisis, she was more Dead than alive; her recovery was exceedingly slow, 6 weeks in Bed and she is still very thin & by no means strong – our little Boy was for a time ailing and delicate, but he is now perking up, and promises well.[24]

The whole settlement sighed with relief with the safe birth of the Simpson child and anxiously watched the slow recovery of Frances. In December both seemed to be doing well and James McMillan looked forward to a gay Christmas with the hostess of the settlement, Frances Simpson, fully recovered:

We go but little about, and of course se[e] *but little of the grandees of the Settlement, with the exception of the Gov*[r] *& Lady who are always the same – Mrs. Simpson is at long last got perfectly recovered which makes us all very happy. The Young fellow is getting well and will be a delightful child. He is not yet made a Christian of, so that we expect a grand let out soon.*[25]

By January, Mrs. Simpson felt well enough for a christening party; the child would be called George Geddes Simpson after his father and grandfather, Simpson's benefactor. "We mean to give a grand Blow out on this Day week," wrote Simpson to McTavish, "when we intend making a Christian of the Youngster, George Geddes Simpson. Cards are out

for 32. They will consume all our good things! "[26]

The gaiety was short-lived; four months later Simpson wrote to McTavish to tell him that the child was dead.[27] When Frances had ridden off to church Sunday, 22 April, George Geddes had taken a spell and died before her return. Both of the parents were grief stricken. Simpson planned to take Frances home by way of Canada that fall and contemplated not returning to the country himself.

By July, however, Simpson had changed his mind. He travelled to York Factory for the annual Council meeting and from there wrote to McTavish telling him of his intention to remain in the country until the summer of 1834, "if I hold out so long."[28] Apparently the "gloomy state of things in England" had been the main consideration causing him to prolong his stay at Red River. After the meeting of Council, Simpson also wrote to the Governor and Committee reporting that "The new Establishment of Fort Garry is in such a state of forwardness that we shall remove into it at the close of the present season."[29] The move into the new fort likely took place soon after Simpson arrived back in the settlement from York Factory. In December, Thomas Simpson reported to Hargrave, "We are exceedingly well housed here in the new buildings."[30]

For George and Frances Simpson, however, the new quarters brought no great relief from the pall of gloom which had descended on their household after the death of their little child in April. Frances was never again herself after her confinement and the tragedy of the spring, and Simpson was certain that permanent damage had been suffered through mismanagement by the doctor. By December he was thinking of taking his wife home in the fall and leaving her there: "I shall certainly never bring her to this country again."[31] Over the long, and probably very miserable winter, the plans for Frances' return to England were finalized. In May, Simpson wrote to McTavish reviewing the misfortunes of their stay in Red River and concluded, "In short, I am grieved to say that our House has been a scene of Sorrow & Sickness for nearly 18 months past, & I myself am more broken hearted & depressed than I am well able to describe."[32] Frances was still ill and determined to go home. He would send her ahead in June by canoe to Montreal so that she could "travel leizurely, and have a few weeks rest in Canada" before he joined her there after the meeting of the Northern Council. They would then undertake the sea voyage to England. He would return again to Canada but his wife would remain at home. Even the new house in the settlement was not enough to overcome Mrs. Simpson's dislike of the settlement and living in the country.

And then another misfortune occurred to change Simpson's plans once again. On 20 May, he was seized with a sudden attack of "blood to the head approaching to apoplexy."[33] He would have to proceed directly home himself, not waiting for the Council at Norway House. At the end of June he was already at Michipicoten, writing of his misfortune to McTavish. The officers of the Company anxiously watched the progress of their Governor to Montreal. "I received two Letters from our worthy Governor," wrote J. D. Cameron to James Hargrave. "He mentions his health as being much improved but still unable to attend to business – As for Mrs. Simpson she was nothing better than when she left red river. In fact that Amiable Little woman was too much Doctored in this country – and I am much afraid she will feel the effects of it as long as she lives."[34] Late in July, the Simpsons set off from Lachine for New York to catch a ship home, arriving in England on 27 August.[35]

Back in England the health of Simpson and his wife slowly improved. Frances was pregnant again – and expected her confinement in January – a fact which may have brought about the rapid journey of the Simpsons home.[36] And in January, Simpson wrote to McTavish telling him that his wife had safely delivered a baby girl. Both were doing well. Frances was under the care of the best ladies' doctor in England at "£3.3 p. visit."[37] Simpson, with his health returning, was already becoming restless in England and planned extensive travels for the following year.

Simpson returned to the country in 1834 by the ship to York and then wintered in the Red River Settlement. But in the season 1834-35, he stayed at the forks rather than at the lower fort, realizing already that the new establishment was too far away from the centre of things in the settlement. Leblanc and his family were staying at the lower fort, perhaps as its sole occupants. "Leblanc, the wife, and your young folks are quite well and living at the New Fort; We are this season at the old Establish[t]."[38] And

in further recognition of the importance of the forks construction of a new Fort Garry began there in 1835. It became the Company's administrative centre in the interior. The lower fort passed through a period of lethargy and secondary function but was still favoured by Simpson as a residence while in the settlement. In 1841, when passing through the Red River on his world journey, he referred to the lower fort as "my own head-quarters when I visit the settlement."[39]

For the decade following 1834, Simpson almost commuted back and forth from England to Canada. John McLean, by no means friendly to Simpson, noted that, "The Governor, having taken up his residence for some years past in England, crosses the Atlantic once a year, and during his brief sojourn, Norway House forms his head-quarters."[40] McLean exaggerated somewhat; but Frances Simpson did continue to live in England and her husband frequently journeyed there. While in the country, he took up residence at Norway House, at Red River, or at Lachine in a large house which the Company had purchased in 1833.[41]

With the passage of time, the years blotted out the unpleasant memories which Frances held of her captivity in the settlement in 1830-33. In 1838, her older sister Isobel married chief Factor Duncan Finlayson and came out to the Red River. If her sister Frances objected strongly to living in the country, her warnings could not have been strong enough to dissuade Isobel. Perhaps she had Frances in mind when Isobel wrote of the Red River:

I think it however but just to remark that from the various reports I had heard of this place I came to it under very unfavourable impressions, but I am pleased to say I found it infinitely superior to the opinion I had originally entertained of it. The living is cheap and good, and one can obtain all the necessaries, and many of the comforts of life, but at the same time I must candidly confess, that for many reasons, I should never like Red River as a place of residence.[42]

There was a touching scene when the Finlayson party reached the Red River and pulled up at the lower fort:

About five o'Clock [Sept. 26, 1840] we arrived at the lower Fort, which had been my sister's [Mrs. George Simpson's] *residence the last year she remained in this country, but it is impossible to describe the feelings that oppressed my heart at the sight of that spot, which had been her home for so many months. It was a beautiful evening, the sun was shining brilliantly upon the water, and the Canadians were singing their liveliest songs to apprize the inhabitants of the Fort of our approach, the scene was the same as in other days, but she (the tender and affectionate companion of my early years, who had formerly given life and cheerfulness to the place) was no longer there and thousands of miles separated us from each other, and after vainly endeavouring to conceal my emotions, my heart at length found relief in a flood of tears.*[43]

In a few years Isobel would see all she would want of Frances and her family and perhaps too much.

In 1841-42, Simpson was absent on his journey around the world. When he returned to England he apparently made plans to move his family to Lachine.

Early in January we were rejoiced to hear of the safe arrival in England of Sir George Simpson our worthy Governor who will be soon again amongst us, I am directed to meet him at Mattawa about the 6 proximo when he is to pass on the way to the Interior, I am happy to learn that he was to be accompanied to Canada by Lady Simpson and the Family so that we expect to have the pleasure of having our Governor to honor the Lachine Establishment for some time to come where he will be more conveniently situated to superintend his various important duties than by going backwards and forwards to England every year.[44]

The move did not take place, however, until 1845 when Duncan Finlayson was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's establishment at Lachine.[45] Finlayson, perhaps as a typical brother-in-law, did not look forward to the arrival of the Simpsons. His family enjoyed a free run of the large Hudson Bay House and he feared with the arrival of the Governor's family he would be forced to vacate.

The Gov. is coming out bag & baggage, that is wt. wife, bairns, servants &c. & how we are to stow them all here is more than I know. I do not wish to anticipate evils but one thing is to me almost certain—that neither our wives, our servts. nay, even our own selves, will pull together in the same direction, and, under the circumstances the weaker must give way. I, therefore, expect to receive notice to quit these quarters, before another year comes round.[46]

Perhaps Lady Simpson had laid down the presence of her sister in Lachine as a

condition for her coming again to the country. Duncan Finlayson had been appointed there in 1844 when it is known that Simpson wanted to bring his family out, and "Lady Simpson's delicate health and her consequent need of her sister's help with an undisciplined family was spoken of later by George Barnston's sister Mary, who came from England as governess in the Simpson family."[47]

The Simpsons and Finlaysons lived together, only with forbearance it seems, for the next eight years. The Finlaysons found some relief in frequent visits to England which were made possible by Sir George Simpson's presence at Lachine. However, in 1850, Simpson decided to move his family back to London. "I shall in all probability," he wrote to John Black in the Red River Settlement, "cross the Atlantic in the course of the ensuing summer with my family and make London my headquarters."[48] Perhaps feeling his age, he hoped to live there permanently, returning to the country occasionally if circumstances demanded his presence. But Lady Simpson's recurring ill-health forced him to postpone his plans, at first for one year and finally indefinitely. Much to the chagrin of Duncan Finlayson, he decided to remain in Hudson Bay House in Lachine, "for some time to come." "My further movements are somewhat uncertain," the frustrated Finlayson wrote to Donald Ross. "I think it is likely that I shall soon quit the service. This laudable intention is strengthened by the determination our mutual friend [Simpson] has come to, of remaining here for some time to come, which is contrary to the understanding I had on the subject when I last left England."[49]

One year later, in 1853, Lady Simpson was dead. The "country" which had tormented her for so many years had finally claimed her as a victim. She had never really recovered from her three brief but unpleasant years in the Red River Settlement. Although Simpson had returned often in the years since their residence there, she never again had travelled beyond the civilised parts of the country. With her death, Simpson gave up entirely his plans to return to London. He continued to travel extensively and to administer the vast domains of the Hudson's Bay Company. Finally in 1860, ill health forced him to turn back at St. Paul from his annual visit to the meeting of the Northern Council at Norway House. At Montreal his health improved somewhat so he was able to take part in the ceremonies connected with the visit of the Prince of Wales. But three days later he was striken with apoplexy and died on 7 September 1860.

Thomas Simpson was born 2 July 1808, the son of Alexander and Mary Simpson.[1] Although his father died in 1821, he was able to attend King's College in Aberdeen from which he graduated in 1828. After a short period when he worked in an accounting office he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1829.

His new career was taken up at the urging of his cousin, George Simpson, then Governor of the Northern and Southern Departments of the Hudson's Bay Company. In entering the service of the Company, he was following the lead of his half-brother, Aemilius Simpson, who had been made superintendent of the Company's marine department on the west coast in 1826 and his younger brother Alexander who had joined the Company in 1828 and had been posted to Lachine. In April, 1829, he joined his brother in Canada after a voyage from Liverpool to New York.

At the end of April, Thomas Simpson travelled by brigade to meet George Simpson at Norway House. After the meeting of the Northern Council he returned with the Governor to Lachine where he worked the season of 1829-30 while George Simpson was in England in search of a bride. In the spring he took the annual brigade to the interior, but stopped at Lake Superior to await the arrival of George and Frances Simpson who followed by light canoe. He travelled with them to Bas-de-la-Rivière, and after they had visited the Red River Settlement, he continued with them to the meeting of the Northern Council at York Factory. In August, the Simpsons left for Red River

but Thomas remained at York Factory. He followed in February and March in an arduous winter journey overland (February-March 1831).

For the next five years he was posted in the settlement or rather to the personal staff of George Simpson. He had been hired to serve as the Governor's secretary although his duties often involved work in the day-to-day activities of the business of the Company's establishment at Red River. "My occupations, in short," he wrote to his brother Alexander, "have been very various; secretary, clerk, storesman, &c."[2] Each year he travelled to York Factory for the busy summer season and during the winter worked at the Red River. When the Governor was in the country, Thomas Simpson's main duties were connected with his position as secretary. Simpson had a very high opinion of his young cousin. In his confidential character book, where his remarks were usually caustic and grudging in praise, he gave Thomas Simpson a very favourable report:

No. 80 (Thomas Simpson) – A Scotchman 3 years in the Service, 24 Years of Age; was considered one of the most finished Scholars in Aberdeen College: is handy & active and will in due time if he goes on as he promises be one of the most complete men of business in the country; acts as my Secty or Confidential Clerk during the busy Season and in the capacities of Shopman, accomptant & Trader at Red River Settlement during the Winter–perfectly correct in regard to private conduct & character.[3]

But matching the active governor pace for pace was a very hectic affair; apparently Thomas Simpson stayed with the elder Simpson while he was in the settlement and worked the long hours necessary to copy out the voluminous correspondence. In the fall of 1832, he moved with the Simpsons to the lower fort but had little time to enjoy the new accommodations. "We are exceedingly well housed here in the new buildings;" he wrote to James Hargrave in December, "but I have been so desperately busy for weeks back and have kept such late hours that I scarcely know at this moment what I am writing."[4]

In the spring, George and Frances Simpson set off for Montreal and England. Their stay in the Red River had been unfortunate and had sorely affected George Simpson's usual efficiency. This may have been the cause of Thomas Simpson's low estimate of his cousin's abilities. "I will not conceal from you, that on a nearer view of his character than I before had, I lost much of that internal respect I entertained towards him. His firmness and decision of mind are much impaired: both in great and small matters, he has become wavering, capricious, and changeable."[5] His conclusion could have been based on a real decline in Simpson's faculties, for he did suffer intensely with the sickness of his wife and the death of his son, but also a sense of frustration. Thomas Simpson was thoroughly convinced that he deserved much more rapid advancement in the Company than came his way, and he was equally convinced that it was George Simpson who was holding back his rise in the Company.

When George Simpson took his wife to England in the season of 1833-34, Thomas Simpson had the opportunity to show his abilities. He remained in the Red River Settlement, probably at Lower Fort Garry, serving directly under Alexander Christie, the chief factor then in charge of the Company's business in the settlement. As usual he went to York Factory to help with the summer flurry of activity and by his own report, the work went "exceedingly well; far less bustle and as good and rapid work as if the Governor himself were on the ground."[6] He prided himself in his ability to handle both the gentlemen and clerks, even better than Simpson himself. "I have this season taught them," he wrote to Alexander, "that I could command respect, and have been in consequence treated by every one, high and low, more *en bourgeois* than *en commis*."[7] And in speculating about the replacement for Governor Simpson if he should not return to the country, Thomas revealed that his ambitions were aimed even higher. "I wish I were five years older: in every other respect, without vanity, I feel myself perfectly competent to the situation; and, with one or two exceptions, hold the abilities of our *wigs* in utter contempt. This season I have been intimate with many of them – have, in the Governor's absence, had much to do with the general business, and see how easily these men can be led."[8]

In the fall, Simpson returned to the Red River where he wintered in the season 1833-34. The whole of the Company establishment seems to have been moved to the lower fort with the exception of a retail shop and the experimental farm which were located at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine. Christie, Simpson and the others of the Company's establishment were stationed at the lower fort.[9] For Thomas Simpson

the winter was a pleasant one. He got on well with Alexander Christie, much better in fact than he did with his cousin George Simpson, and with the absence of the Governor he was free from his demanding secretarial duties. In December he wrote to his friend James Hargrave at York:

We are exceedingly comfortable here this season; indeed our worth Bourgeois kind and estimable nature would make any place so. Mr. & Mrs. McMillan reside at the Forks, in Donald's old quarters—they are quite well—but I have not seen them for some time—Mr. McKinlay is much brushed up in the outward man, and proves a very useful and willing assistant in the business here.[10]

In March he wrote to his brother Alexander again pecking away at his cousin's administration by criticizing the Governor's decision to build the lower fort.

This place is a large stone establishment, that has cost us a good few thousands, and is yet unfinished: we are making preparations to build a large granary and provision store this summer, unless the work be stopped. The Bigwigs at home are rather cool on the subject, and I do not wonder at it.[11]

If the absence of George Simpson in England in 1833-34 had given Thomas Simpson an easy winter, he was soon given more than enough work to do when the Governor returned to the settlement in 1834-35. With Simpson's return, the centre of administration of the Company in Red River moved back to the forks. In the two years that the lower fort had been completed to the extent that it could accommodate the Company's establishment, it had proved unsatisfactory for it was too far removed from the centre of the settlement. The Company had retained a sales shop at the forks and Alexander Christie probably had to commute often from the lower fort in his role as Governor of Assiniboia. There is evidence too that the Company shifted its operations to the forks in the summers during the years before the upper fort was rebuilt. With Simpson's arrival in the settlement in the fall of 1834, he not only located his headquarters at the forks but made arrangements to construct a new substantial fort there so the move would be a permanent one. And with the Governor's return, Thomas was once again burdened with his secretarial duties. "I envy the York Gents. their saturday's holidays," he wrote to James Hargrave, "for our noses are kept so close to the grind stone that we cannot even call Sunday our own, in spite of which, thank God, I am in capital spirits, and inhabit Donald McKenzie's old office, if you remember that antidiluvian region."[12] Although they wintered at the forks it was apparently planned to move back to the lower fort in the spring. "We shall I believe resume our quarters at the New Fort in April."[13] Presumably the winter 1835-36 was spent in much the same way although George Simpson did not winter in the Red River Settlement.

When George Simpson returned to the country in 1836, he carried with him the authority of the Governor and Committee in London for the equipping of an expedition to explore the unknown sections of the Arctic shoreline.[14] The Hudson's Bay Company apparently hoped to use significant Arctic discoveries as a lever in their negotiations with the British government for the renewal of their exclusive trading privilege. At the meeting of the Northern Council at Norway House in July, 1836, the plan was discussed and the arrangements made. The Governor had apparently already approached his cousin and had asked him to draw up a proposal for the conduct of the exploration. Thomas Simpson's plan was the one finally adopted although, much to his dismay, he was not placed exclusively in charge of the expedition but was instead given co-directorship with Chief Factor Peter Warren Dease, a more senior officer in the Company's service who had accompanied Franklin on his expedition in 1824.

The main objective of the expedition was to fill out the previous work of Franklin, of Beechey, and of Back which had begun the mapping of the North American shore of the Arctic Ocean. Large expanses of this shoreline remained unexplored; they possibly would hold the secret of the Northwest Passage. The party was therefore directed to two areas: the shoreline between the mouth of the Mackenzie River west to the Bering Strait for Franklin had not gone as far west as Point Barrow, Beechey's easternmost point; and the shoreline between the Coppermine River and the mouth of the Great Fish River which Back had explored in 1826. This was a Company operation and the resources of its farflung empire were placed behind the expedition.

Following the meeting of the Northern Council, Dease left immediately for

Athabaska to make arrangements for the expedition. Thomas Simpson returned to the settlement to prepare for his role in the exploration.

Since my return from Norway House, my time has been chiefly devoted to astronomy, surveying, and chart drawing; my old mathematics were more readily polished up than I anticipated; and I have all those branches now at my fingers' ends. I have likewise, read a good deal, with the hope of getting rid of the stiff and ungraceful style of Rupert's Land correspondence, which is still jarring in my ears, and marring the freedom of the pen that may ere long have to figure before the public.[15]

For Simpson, the expedition offered the opportunity to give expression to his ambitions, his pride, and his romantic nature. "I myself would have been ere now thoroughly disgusted with this service," he wrote to his brother, "had not a ray of light shone, all of a sudden, upon my path, in the shape of a mission to the Arctic regions, where, having shaken off the trammels of pounds, shillings and pence, I hope to achieve something worthy of the education and talents bestowed upon me."[16]

The next day, 1 December 1836, Thomas Simpson set off on foot from Red River in a winter journey to Fort Chipewyan. He reached the post, 1,377 (1,277) miles from Red River, in 62 days, a commentary on Simpson's tremendous capabilities for winter travel.[17] The remainder of the winter was spent at Fort Chipewyan and on 1 June, the party set off to accomplish the first phase of their three-year expedition. In the course of the summer they travelled down the Mackenzie to its mouth and then westward along the Arctic coast line. On 23 July, they arrived at Return Reef, the westernmost point reached by Franklin in 1826, and on 1 August, Boat Extreme, where the ice conditions prevented further progress by small boat. Leaving Dease with the boats, Thomas Simpson continued the expedition with a small party of five men, travelling on foot. They reached Point Barrow, the object of the expedition, early in the morning of 4 August: "On reaching it, and seeing the ocean extending away to the southward on the opposite side of the Point, they hoisted their flag, and with three cheers took possession of their discoveries in his Majesty's name."[18]

Simpson made contact with the rest of the party on 6 August, and the expedition began its return that day. They reached Fort Norman on the Mackenzie River on 4 September, and immediately reported to the Governor and Committee, and to George Simpson. With the same express, Simpson sent a letter to his brother Alexander and it was evident that he felt that the success of the expedition was due to his efforts alone.

Fortune and its great Disposer have this season smiled upon my undertakings, and shed the first bright beams upon the dark prospect of a North American life. Yes, my dearest brother, congratulate me, for I, and I alone, have the well-earned honour of uniting the Arctic to the Great Western Ocean, and of unfurling the British flag on Point Barrow.[19]

From Fort Norman the exploration party travelled across Great Bear Lake to Fort Confidence, a wintering post which had been established to serve the expedition.

The winter on Great Bear Lake was a bitter one, the mean temperature for the six months of residence being 14.07 degrees below zero; in March a low of -60 degrees was recorded. The houses were not finished when the expedition arrived and the party sent ahead had not been able to stock sufficient provisions for the wintering. "We were threatened with starvation at the outset," wrote Simpson to his brother in January, "but by dint of dispersing all hands, we got over that, and now enjoy abundance. Our buildings are small as the climate and our means demanded."[20]

During the winter Simpson explored the area, searching for the best route to the Coppermine for the expedition of the following year. And later in April he took a party from Fort Confidence with provisions and equipment to a stream 15 miles from its junction with the Coppermine and left them with two men to be picked up when the expedition followed in June.

On 6 June, the main part of the expedition departed from Fort Confidence with the boats and passed over the Dease River and Dismal Lakes to the provision station on the Kendall River. The Coppermine was navigated at full flood and the ocean reached on 1 July. Here the heavy ice conditions which would eventually bring the exploration for that season to a premature close first became evident. After a wait of 17 days at the mouth of the Coppermine, the boats could finally move but only with difficulty. And on 20 August, further progress was made completely impossible by a solid field of ice. Dease again agreed to attend the boats while Thomas

Simpson set off with a small party for further exploration on foot. On the first day they reached the easternmost point reached by Franklin in 1821, and continuing until 25 August, explored approximately 120 miles more of the coast line. On 25 August Simpson erected a "pillar of stones" and took possession of the territory in the name of the Honourable Company for the Queen of Great Britain.[21] They then turned back, reaching Dease on 29 August. The expedition quickly made its way up the Coppermine, left the boats at the Kendall River, and arrived back at Fort Confidence on 14 September.

The expedition had been an "incomplete success."[22] Simpson placed the full blame for the failure to reach the Great Fish River squarely on Dease's shoulders. He had insisted that the expedition turn back on 20 August when Simpson had wanted to continue, maintaining that September would be the best month for navigation. Upon returning to Fort Confidence, he had a great deal of difficulty convincing Dease and the remainder of the party that they should continue the exploration in the following year.

The winter at Fort Confidence was less severe than that of 1836-37, although a great deal of aid was extended to neighbouring Indians to save them from starvation. Unlike the previous winter there were already signs of thaw in May. At the end of June they were at the mouth of the Coppermine, and after Thomas Simpson had explored Richardson's River, the sea ice opened, and they continued east along the coastline. At the end of July, they came to the farthest point reached by Simpson in the previous year. On 16 August they reached Montreal Island, and on its northern side found a cache left by Sir George Back's party five years before. They had achieved the result expected from their expedition; the linking of Franklin's exploration east from the mouth of the Coppermine to Back's journey west from the mouth of the Great Fish River. Before turning back they conducted exploration east of the mouth of the Great Fish as far as Cape Britannica where they erected "a conical pile of ponderous stones, fourteen feet high" and took possession "of our extensive discoveries in the name of Victoria I, amidst the firing of guns and the enthusiastic cheers of the whole party."[23] They then ran east along the coast for another 40 miles, the easternmost point of their expedition. From there they returned to Cape Britannica and to Point Ogle on the west side of the mouth of the Great Fish. Making a small diversion to cross the strait to the southern shore of Victoria Island, they continued homeward. On 15 September they entered the mouth of the Coppermine, and arrived at Fort Confidence on 24 September. After winding up affairs there, the party passed through Great Bear Lake to the Mackenzie and up the river to Fort Simpson where they arrived 14 October. The expedition remained there until 2 December when Simpson set out overland for Red River, arriving there 2 February 1840. The whole journey of some 1,900 miles was accomplished in 61 days.[24]

Simpson was eager to continue with the exploration for another season, but alone. While at Fort Simpson he wrote to both George Simpson and the Governor and Committee urging that another expedition be sent under his direction in 1840 and 1841 to explore the Gulf of Boothia and thus complete the exploration of the northwest Arctic. Both Simpson and Dease had been awarded leaves of absence for their previous three years of exertion. Dease was prepared to take his but Simpson, anxious to get started again, preferred to turn his down. Very impatiently, he awaited permission from London to continue exploration. While in Red River, he wrote to Alexander, outlining his achievements of the previous year and at the same time telling of the uncertainty of his future plans.

My own situation at present is a very singular one – uncertain till the canoes arrive whether I shall turn my face again to the North Pole, or towards Merry England . . . . I have . . . been awaiting my future destiny with impatience, and the moment it is decided shall write you again; till then adieu! [25]

The canoes arrived with no news from the Governor and Committee. Unknown to Simpson, the Committee had decided in his favour and had approved another expedition; but the letter dated 3 June had been sent out on the York ships. Impatient, Simpson decided to travel to England to argue his own case. On 6 June he set out southward with halfbreed companions John Bird, Antoine Legros Sr. and Antoine Legros Jr., to travel through the United States to England. He was never heard from again.

Simpson and two of his halfbreed companions were shot. Simpson apparently killed the two halfbreeds in the evening, and the third (Legros, the son),

escaped to tell of the slaying to a large party of halfbreeds with which they had been travelling. In the morning a group returned with Legros to Simpson's camp. In their subsequent testimony they claimed that Simpson was alive when they arrived and that he first shot at them and then shot himself. Alexander Simpson would never accept their testimony and claimed that Simpson had in fact been murdered by his travelling companions.

A true explanation of the events would lie somewhere in between. Simpson had just returned from three years in the Arctic – three years of arduous travel in desolate country. He craved the prestige and reknown which would arise from his explorations and yet was constantly fearful that credit would be denied. He was probably subject to temporary bouts of insanity. His travel habits were strenuous and he may have pushed his halfbreed companions too hard. The halfbreeds, as a group, were not liked by Simpson and Simpson was not well liked by them. Probably a small incident sparked a fight which ended with the two halfbreeds dead and Simpson wounded. The party which arrived on the following day perhaps finished him off.[26]

The recognition which Thomas Simpson craved was finally extended but he never knew of it. Dease and Simpson both received a civil list pension of £100 from the British government. Thomas Simpson was awarded the Founder's Medal by the Royal Geographical Society for the "promotion of geographical science and discovery." It was awarded at the anniversary meeting of the society, 27 May 1839, and accepted by the Deputy Governor of the Company in the absence of Simpson:

advancing almost to its completion, the solution of the great problem of the configuration of the northern line of the North American continent.... Mr. Simpson and Mr. Dease, whatever may be the result of their further labours, have already earned for themselves a high place amongst those who have added to the fame and glory of British enterprise.... The result of these two expeditions is, that the northern shores of America, – all the acquisition of British hardihood, perseverance and judgment – can now be accurately laid down on our maps, from Behring's Straits to the 106th degree of longitude, forming a continuous line of coast of upwards of sixty degrees; and a fair prospect is opened, that another season may go far to complete our knowledge of the whole.[27]

But the Company was the main beneficiary of the Arctic discovery. Governor John Henry Pelly was created a baronet and George Simpson knighted. The Company also had its exclusive trading privilege renewed. Thomas Simpson's journal was published in 1843 and Alexander Simpson, concerned about the cloud covering his brother's death and the relative obscurity of his life, published a biography in 1845. Still it is probable that full recognition has not been accorded to the work of Simpson. He did not discover the Northwest Passage as he believed at his death but he did further considerably the exploration of the Arctic shore of the North American continent.

Adam Thom brought trouble wherever he appeared in Canadian history. "A man of considerable legal learning and of an acute intelligence, he was nevertheless vain, pompous and lacking in judgement. Arrogant of mind and tactless of manner, Thom was endowed with a knack for irritating turns of speech and with a restless tongue and pen. He was, moreover, a standing invitation to trouble in a colony more than half French."[1] He spent 14 years in the Red River Settlement, arriving as the highest judicial agent in 1839 and leaving in 1854 when the Métis forced the Company to remove him from his official position in the courts. From 1839 to 1846, he lived in the Big House at Lower Fort Garry, and before he left unceremoniously in 1854, he stayed for a short time in the house while awaiting passage in the Company boats to York Factory.

Thom was born 31 August 1802.[2] He was educated at King's College and graduated with an M.A. in 1824. After a short period teaching school in Scotland,[3] he came to Canada where he edited first the *Settler* in 1833, and then the Montreal *Herald*, chief mouthpiece of the British Party, between 1836 and 1838. At the same time he read law and was called to the bar in 1837. His unsympathetic views of the French Canadians and their aspirations were evident and he made no attempt to disguise them in the 1830s when political, economic and social issues were fast bringing Lower Canada to open rebellion; in fact, his "Anti-Gallic Letters," published in 1836 under a pseudonym, Camillus, added to the tendency to rebellion. In

them he denounced "the perfect novelty of the absurdly exclusive doctrine of French nationality," and had warned that "Lower Canada ought to be English, at the risk, if necessary, of not being British."[4]

Following the rebellion, Thom continued to represent the views of the "British Party" and criticized the commission of Lord Durham sent to investigate the causes of rebellion and to recommend solutions. Perhaps to quiet his criticisms, he was appointed an "assistant Commissioner of Enquiry into the Municipal Institutions of Lower Canada," one of the investigations being conducted for the commission.[5] And later as one of Durham's secretaries he travelled to England where he remained in 1838-39 during the drafting of the report of the Commission. The extent of his involvement in the actual writing of the report is not known, although at least one contemporary British newspaper attributed a great deal of the report to his authorship.

In 1839, Thom was appointed Recorder of Rupert's Land by George Simpson who probably knew of Thom's abilities and his biases from his sojourn in Montreal. As recorder, he would become the active head of legal affairs in the settlement, legal adviser to the Company and the Governor of Assiniboia, and a member of the Council of Assiniboia. Before leaving for his new post, Thom married Anne Blachford and then came out from England by way of New York.

The Thoms resided in the Big House at the lower fort for the first seven years that they were in the colony. They shared the accommodation with John Black, the clerk in charge of the operation of the fort and also occasionally with Simpson on his visits to Red River. Their son, Adam Bisset Thom, was born 2 August 1843, probably in the Big House. In 1846 when Captain Moody of the Royal Engineers arrived to prepare the fort for the Sixth Regiment which would occupy the fort between 1846 and 1848, he took over Adam Thom's rooms in the Big House. The Thoms had moved to a house three or four miles south of the fort. In 1847, they purchased the home of Chief Factor Charles (later Bishop's Court), and resided there until they left the settlement in 1854.[6]

As recorder, Thom's duties were extensive. Simpson often called upon him for legal advice concerning the Company's operations not only in the settlement but throughout the country. He also remained on very friendly terms with Simpson, sending him long letters filled with Red River news and gossip, and this continued even after he fell from favour.[7] And he edited Simpson's account of his *Journey Round the World* before it was published. But the bulk of Thom's duties were taken up in the settlement and it was this role which brought his downfall. Thom's stay in Red River was predictably stormy. As the only person with a knowledge of law he was often called upon to give advice, especially in the 1840s when the Company was caught up in the lengthy struggle to put down the Métis' free trading. His involvement did nothing to improve his relations with the Métis, who were well aware of his Francophobic views.

The whole matter came to a head with the Sayer trial in 1849 when John Ballenden, the chief factor of the Company in Red River, foolishly decided to bring one of the free traders to trial.[8] On the day of the trial, an armed band of Métis gathered outside the courtroom. With courage, Thom proceeded with the trial, and even allowed Sayer to be represented by James Sinclair who chose a jury not unfriendly to the defendant. In the ensuing trial, Sayer was found guilty, but the Company applied no penalty, giving the impression that the free traders had won. From that point, the trade was in fact free and the Métis, encouraged, pressed other demands forward. Following the trial, the Council of Assiniboia drew up what it thought were the demands of the Métis. First among these was "the immediate removal of Mr. Recorder Thom from the Settlement."[9] Although Thom stated his willingness to speak to the court in both languages in cases involving Canadian or halfbreed interests, his concession was not enough. When Simpson arrived in the settlement in June, he persuaded Thom to abstain from the exercise of his office. He also made arrangements for the inclusion of suitable Métis on the Council of Assiniboia and apparently also for their appointment as local magistrates.[10]

Thom restrained himself until February, 1850, when sued by a carpenter for payment for services, he entered the court and insisted that he be tried by an English judge and jury.[11] When the court refused his request he left in a rage. Arriving in the settlement in June, Simpson was met with a delegation of the Métis equally enraged by Thom's appearance in court. Thom's position in the

settlement became wholly untenable in July when he appeared in court in the Foss/Pelly case.[12] Captain C.V. Foss of the Sixth Regiment had sued A.E. Pelly, the accountant at the upper fort, for slander in connection with his relationship with Mrs. Ballenden, the wife of John Ballenden, the man in charge of the Company's operations in Red River. The scandal was a sordid affair which had the community in an uproar and the Company's officers at loggerheads. Thom first advised Foss and Mrs. Ballenden in the conduct of their case, and then, when the court proceedings became complex, was asked by Governor Caldwell, the presiding judge, to enter the court. He was allowed to do so only with the sufferance of the Métis who were consulted before his appearance. Once in the court, Thom dominated the proceedings and almost browbeat the jury into a decision favourable to Foss by holding Mrs. Ballenden's innocence as the main issue at stake. Thom's actions seemed even more reprehensible when it was discovered that Mrs. Ballenden and Foss had indeed committed an indiscretion; they continued their affair later in the year following the trial.

Thom's action in the Foss/Pelly case drew him into disfavour with the Governor and Committee. They had received reports of Thom's inability to get along with the Métis but were reluctant to lose face by removing him from office. With this new development a general court of the Company was called in order to dismiss Thom from the office of recorder; but to leave the council and courts with a legal adviser, Thom was appointed Clerk of the Court and Council.[13] Even this minor position was unacceptable to the Métis who were insistent that Thom not enter the courts in any capacity.

With reference to Thom's new position I am sorry to say that, although he accepted the new appointment, contrary to the expectation of all his friends, it has in no way conduced to the peace of the settlement, or contributed to rendering him more popular. Before the May Court I took the opportunity of seeing Rielle & others of the Canadian agitators, and explained to them the change in Thom's position, and that he was now the servant of the Court instead of Master as heretofore. They replied that in their opinion the people would not let him into court even in the capacity of constable. And this proved to be the case, for I found the excitement so great among the French half breeds, that I believe if Thom had made his appearance he would have been maltreated. I thought it, therefore, better to take it upon myself to desire him to abstain from coming to the Court at all, which he at once consented to do.[14]

Thom was prevented from pursuing the duties of his position but he still continued to draw his full pay of £700 per annum. At the meeting of the Northern Council in July, 1852, the officers of the Company objected to Thom's salary which came from the fur trade and asked Colvile to make their concern known in London. By the following spring the Governor and Committee had made an arrangement with Thom whereby he would vacate his office.[15] He left in the fall of 1854 by the *Prince of Wales* from York.[16]

It is difficult to assess the contribution of Thom to the history of the Red River Settlement. He has been called the "father of the bench and bar in western Canada" because he was the first recorder in Rupert's Land and did much to organize the administration of justice in the colony.[17] Most of his influence was more negative. His presence so stirred up the Métis that their demands for recognition became insistent to the point where they could no longer be ignored by the Company. Thom's removal from the courts and the council, and his replacement by F. G. Johnson, a person much more acceptable to the Métis, and the increased representation of Métis sentiment on the Council of Assiniboia were in part attributable to the animosity inspired by Thom's presence and views.

Appendix E: Eden Colvile, "The Young Commercial Patrician"

Eden Colvile was thirty in 1849 when he received the appointment of Associate Governor in Rupert's Land, Sir George Simpson's deputy in the handling of the Company's affairs.[1] He was born in 1819, the fourth son of Andrew Colvile, the Deputy Governor of the Company since 1839. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, he graduated in 1841. After a short sojourn in business in England, he went to Lower Canada in 1844 to manage the development of the seigneury of Beauharnois for the London Land Company, probably due to the influence of his father who was one of the Company directors. In November, 1844, he was elected a member of the assembly for the County of Beauharnois "as a supporter of Governor Metcalfe's administration."[2] And in the following year he married Anne, the daughter of Lieutenant Colonel John Maxwell of Montreal.[3]

The London Land Company's venture in Canada was not a particularly successful one; by 1851, the seigneury had reverted to the Ellices, and the company was no longer in existence. And by some accounts, Colvile's management was not particularly effective; indeed, the historian of Beauharnois describes it harshly as "poor."[4] But Colvile had apparently caught the eye of George Simpson, who wrote in 1848 that he "possessed general information, business habits and conciliatory disposition,"[5] an assessment which was supported by Colvile's subsequent successful career.

In 1848, Simpson was apparently considering retirement, or at least searching for a way to lessen the arduous duties and travel which the management of the Company involved. He had the opportunity to observe Colvile in Montreal at a time when that man was probably becoming restive with the limited success of the Beauharnois venture.

The two made a tour of inspection to Red River and Norway House in the summer of 1848, and in the fall Colvile returned to England. On 3 January 1849, the Governor and Committee "Resolved to appoint Mr. Eden Colvile a Governor of Rupert's Land to preside at all Councils of Chief Factors, and to attend to all other duties of Governor in the absence of Sir George Simpson. It was also Resolved to appoint Mr. Eden Colvile a member of the Council of Assiniboia."[6] The appointment was a means of easing Simpson's arduous duties. In the letter accompanying Colvile's commission, there was a further elaboration of his function: "I am directed by the Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company to hand you the accompanying commission appointing you Governor in Rupert's Land and conferring upon you in the absence of Sir George Simpson all the powers and privileges of Governor in Chief in all places where trade is authorized to be carried on by the charter of the said Company."[7] Colvile would in effect be the resident governor of the country, taking up the extensive travel and inspection which had marked Simpson's years as governor. Simpson planned to move his headquarters to London, from which he would act in a supervisory role, visiting "Canada & other places as circumstances may render necessary."[8]

Colvile wanted to carry on in the adventuresome fashion of Simpson's early travel. He was assigned to the Columbia district for the winter of 1849-50 and proposed to get to his new posting by way of Panama. A concerned directorate soon vetoed his adventure.

As respects Eden Colvile you will learn from the Secretary that his appointment has been agreed on. I do not approve of his attempting to get into the Country by Panama, the route is not yet sufficiently certain that way. I consider it better he should accompany you to Norway House this year, for which purpose he will leave here for Canada in proper time.[9]

In his new capacity, Colvile returned to Canada in the summer of 1849 and travelled again to Norway House with Simpson. While Simpson returned to Montreal after the meeting of the Northern Council, Colvile continued west of the mountains where he wintered in the Columbia district on Vancouver Island.

A Troubled Red River

Whether it was originally intended that Colvile would be stationed in Red River[10] is not known, but his appointment as a councillor of Assiniboia in the original commission seems to indicate that he would spend some time in the colony. The Red River Settlement was undergoing a painful stage in its growth which came to a head at the middle of the century. In 1849, the longstanding dispute between the Company and the settlers over trade outside of the company was brought to a climax in the trial of a free trader, Pierre Guillaume Sayer. Although the courts upheld the Company's exclusive right to trade, the waiving of the penalty by the Company convinced the Métis that the trade was

free. The jurisdiction of the Company had been further weakened by the appointment of Major William Caldwell, the commander of the Chelsea Pensioners as Governor of Assiniboia. Caldwell, to be charitable, was ineffective and foolish, commanding no respect from the Métis or English in the settlement. Under his governorship, the civil government carried almost no weight. He was able to do nothing to appease the Métis who were on the point of open revolt against the courts under the jurisdiction of Adam Thom, the anglophile recorder of Rupert's Land. Thom's reputation of Francophobia during the Durham period in Canada had travelled with him to the settlement and his actions there confirmed his earlier stated attitudes. The Métis up in arms, the civil authority ineffectual, and the company image considerably tarnished in the Sayer affair, the settlement was badly in need of a stabilizing influence. On top of this, in 1849-50 the Presbyterian inhabitants of the colony became involved in a dispute with the Company and the Anglican church; and the Company's officials in the settlement were openly split in their reaction to a supposed affair between Mrs. Ballenden and the second in command of the Chelsea Pensioners. As the most troublesome part of the Company's vast empire, it no doubt seemed logical to post the associate governor there.

The Preparations

By January, 1850, Andrew Colvile, a very concerned father, was searching for servants for his son's stay in the Red River; Mrs. Colvile, concerned about the isolation of the settlement, anxiously inquired about the communications with the outside world:

Has anything been settled about a regular post to R.R. in the way you mentioned in a letter of some time ago? Mrs. Colvile is anxious on this subject . . . . We have not yet found servants for him – and it is not easy to get people who wd. answer & be willing to go.[11]

A month later he wrote again to report that he had found suitable servants:

I have engaged a man & his wife without children as servants for Eden at Red River which I think will be steady & useful – you have so many things to settle and arrange that you forget some part of what passed. I understand that you & Eden had settled that it would be necessary to send him servants of this description & named the wages for the two at 60 p. an.[12]

With fatherly concern, Andrew Colvile continued preparation; in April, he wrote to Simpson asking him to

take care to secure in the boats coming up from York Factory after the arrival of the ships room for the man & woman servants going out to him & other things also for the things that will be shipped under his mark – and that you will secure for him out of the store or shop at R.R. such wine, tea, coffee, & sugar and other household necessaries as he may require in case of any deficiency in the store. I shall send him boxes (?) the books, carpeting, & other things that he wrote for – a sufficiency of crockery ware & glass for dinner, tea & coffee, for twelve people, & some house linen & table linen – and some printed cottons for furniture.[13]

The goods and servants were loaded on the ships in England and W.G. Smith, the Secretary of the Company, wrote to Hargrave at York Factory telling him to take special care.

Will you be so good as to select 2000 manilla cheeroots from those going out this year for the Company & forward them to Red River for Mr. Eden Colvile. Mr. C. is to be charged cost price for them.

There are several packages on board the Prince Rupert to Mr. Colvile's address as you will notice by the Bill of Lading. They are to be put in charge of the Servants who go out by that vessel & Mr. C. our Deputy Governor will be obliged by your giving the necessary directions, so as to insure the whole being sent on this year.

P.S. Since writing the foregoing, I find that ten of the before mentioned packages, say Nos. 12/21, have been shut out of the P. Rupert, & they will, in consequence have to go by the Chartered Vessel Flora. I hope you will be able to get them up this year even should the Flora be later in her arrival than the P. Rupert.[14]

In the meantime, Colvile travelled east from the Columbia district to attend a meeting of the Northern Council at Norway House in June. He took time out in August to write to Simpson arranging to have a "few things for my wife to come up by the canoes in spring" and also asked for "a file of the Montreal newspapers."[15] Mrs. Colvile was travelling to Red River by way of Montreal. On 13 July, she arrived at Fort William on the schooner from Sault Ste. Marie and met Colvile who arrived the same day by canoe from Norway House. The two departed together for Red River, 19 July.

A Squire in Red River

By the middle of August, the Colviles were setting up their home in the Big House at the lower fort. "We are beginning to be settled in our new abode," wrote Colvile to Simpson, 15 August, "but we shall not be very comfortable till the boats arrive from York with our goods & chattels & servants."[16] The Big House had been extensively renovated in 1849 for the accommodation of the Bishop of Rupert's Land and his entourage. The bishop had conveniently moved out shortly after his arrival in the fall of 1849, leaving the house free for the Colviles. They were forced to share the Big House with John Ballenden and his wife when they first arrived. The scandal involving Mrs. Ballenden and Captain Foss of the Chelsea Pensioners had made it unpleasant for the two to remain in the upper settlement. Ballenden, on a year's leave of absence, soon left for England while his wife remained behind in the lower end of the house.

In a very short time, Colvile established himself in his comfortable surroundings. A little more than a week after his first letter to Simpson, he wrote again. *We are very comfortably settled now, and shall be more so when our goods & servants arrive from York. Johnnie is officiating as our cook, & we found a half breed girl here, a Nancy Fiddler, who makes a tolerable housemaid.*[17]

Mrs. Colvile was pleasantly surprised by Red River but Colvile felt that she would be lonely with no person of her own sex; Colvile could also have added class.

Madame is much better pleased with Red River than she expected to be, but I fear will be rather lonely for want of a companion of her own sex.[18]

Colvile's goods and servants were duly sent from York Factory by Mr. D. Bannerman's brigade:[19]

Boat No 4 for Red River Mr. D. Bannerman's Brigade Passengers — 2 servants, for E. Colvile Esqu. & baggage 3 p. ea.

Note: The above six pieces for baggage & provisions alone — personal passage estimates @ 2 pieces each say — 4 p.E. Colvile Esqu.

1 Bale	*p. -1*
1 case #10	*-3*
4 Do. #4,5,6.9	*-6*
5 Do. ea. 1 p.	*-5*
12 casks	*-12*
	27

Colvile had carefully arranged for their safe passage down from the Factory by having John Ballenden write to Hargrave: *Previous to his departure from Norway House, Mr. Colvile requested me to address you respecting two servants—I think a man and His wife—who are to come out for him by the ship this season. He is anxious that they should take their passage hither in any of the boats,—tho' one of which appear to be decent men; and that all property which may come out for him should be sent up in the same boat, so that his servant may look after his several packages.*[20]

Colvile "got on very well" with his English servants once they had arrived safely from the Factory. Johnnie Garton, his native servant, was assigned to work under George Davis, the shopkeeper:

I get on very well with my English servants, and finding no use for Johnnie Garton [John Garton, listed in the Company's books as a "native," was employed in the Fort Coulonge District from 1846-49. He appears to have been attached to Colvile as a servant from 1849 until 1852.] *during the winter, I have put him into the Sale shop under George Davis, which he likes very well, as it will teach him how to sell, and he works away in the evening at writing and accounts with George Davis.*[21]

The Routine

The Colviles began immediately to repair the social fences. One week after their arrival in the colony they attended the Sunday service in the Catholic church to the great delight of the Métis and then gathered with the upper crust of the settlement:

We went to the Catholic church on Sunday to the great delight of the Canadians; and on Monday we dined with the Major, who had collected all the Bishops, Priests & Deacons in the settlement, and a dreadfully heavy affair it was. In fact I think the less society one has in this place the better, for the people are very dull, and very fond of scandal; & tongues are unruly members.[22]

Quite largely the Colviles were allowed to and preferred to keep to themselves, travelling occasionally to the upper settlement, but mostly remaining at their home in the Big House entertaining visitors from the upper settlement. Writing to Simpson in July, 1852, Colvile noted his preference for the lower fort. "Were the Major out of Red River, & I Governor of Assiniboia, I would live at the Upper Fort, though I like things better as they

are as far as I am personally concerned."[23] Socially the new resident governor and his wife proved a boon for the settlement; and Colvile was very much the gentleman attending to his affairs.

The new Governor could be very much the squire if he wished, and what with the supervision of the imported livestock, riding, driving and visiting, the time passed plesantly, if a trifle dully. . . .Mrs Colvile played the part of the squire's lady naturally, and her influence soothed the ruffled susceptibilities of the clergy and their ladies, and closed some rifts in Red River's heterogeneous community.[24]

In September, 1851, they entertained Governor Ramsay of the Minnesota Territory who arrived with 25 dragoons and stayed one night with the Colviles at the lower fort.[25]

Gradually the various problems disrupting the Red River Settlement were dissipated. With Ballenden in England, his wife recommenced her affair with Captain Foss overtly and the splitting scandal rose its head dramatically but unquestionably, and then resolved itself with Mrs. Ballenden in effect drummed out of Red River society. She, of course, moved out of the lower end of the Big House and removed this sticky presence from the Colviles. The presbyterian question was amicably settled. Caldwell, although remaining ineffectual, was bolstered by the presence of the associate governor of the Company in the settlement and on the Council. Colvile had even gone so far as to preside in his place but was forced to revert to his former position of Councillor by the Company directors who wished to keep the affairs of the Company as separate as possible from those of the settlement. Thom, although retained in the Company's employ, was kept out of the courts to appease the ruffled feelings of the Métis population.

Most of Colvile's time was taken up with the administration of the Northern Department. Shortly after his arrival in the settlement, Colvile wrote to the officers in charge of posts in the department announcing that they should now report to him; for example he wrote to Hargrave at York Factory, saying,

I beg to announce to you my intention of wintering at this place, and have to request that you will communicate with me on all subjects of public interest by any opportunity that may present itself.[26]

Simpson also wrote to officers telling them of his plans to shift his headquarters to London.

It is not at present my intention to visit the Northern Department next year, the chief superintendence of the business, therefore, will devolve on Mr. Colvile; he will hold a Council at York Factory, whither he will proceed in June. I shall in all probability cross the Atlantic in the course of the ensuing summer, with my family, and make London my headquarters.[27]

Correspondence relating to the Northern Department which formerly went directly to Sir George Simpson now came to Colvile. And with it came the responsibility for draughting the extensive replies and the daily administration of the department.

In July, Colvile took his wife to York Factory for the meeting of the Council of the Northern Department, arriving late on 4 July.

At a late hour last evening Govr. Colville [sic] *and Lady accompanied by Mr. C.F. Ballenden arr. in two canoes from Norway House. A salute of 7 guns was fired this morning.*[28]

The next day the Governor led the public prayers. The Council meetings began 7 July, and on 19 July, the Colviles set out for Red River. The journey and visit with Letitia Hargrave were tonic for Mrs. Colvile who was "all the better for her voyage to York."[29]

The Colviles continued to collect about them the accountrements of a gracious life. In a letter accompanying the ships from England, W.G. Smith wrote to William Mactavish requesting that Mr. Colvile's goods be sent to the settlement as soon as possible.

There are Eleven packages on board the Prince of Wales to the address of Mr. Eden Colvile and I have to beg that you will endeavour to get them up to Red River by one of the first Boats.[30]

Donald Bannerman was again selected to carry the important cargo, and in September, Mactavish wrote informing Colvile that "he has taken on *all* your property which came by the ship, besides a few supplies from this place for your use."[31]

2 boats for Red River: Mr. Don. Bannerman p. Eden Colvile Esq.
15 ps. — 1 large case

1-1/2 ps. – 11 case #4
1/2 " – 1 Do 11
2 " – 4 boxes in 2 bundles #5,7,
6 " – 6 cases #1,2,3,6,9,7

25 pieces

p. General Charges Out. 1851 for Govr. Colvile

5 ps. – 1 Barrel porter
– 1 case sundries # 1
– 1 case Do # 2.[32]

The large case, making up 15 pieces, was a piano which caused Bannerman some concern but arrived safely in the settlement after the tortuous trip from York Factory.

I was very glad to learn from your favor of 5th Dec. that Donald Bannerman had taken up your property so safe, particularly the piano, the bare sight of which had put the unfortunate man into a perfect fever here, his people were not over fond of the package and put all Kinds of nonsense into his head, and that old ghost Mowat with his jokes did all he could to make things worse.[33]

The last months Colvile was in the settlement seem to have been pleasant ones. By this time he had accumulated a number of amenities in the Big House which must have made it a comfortable place indeed. The troubles of Red River had largely been taken care of and he could settle back to socialize and to manage the affairs of his department. "He is a very pleasant companion," wrote John Rae of Colvile who accompanied him to Pembina in the spring of 1852, " 'Laugh and get fat' should be his motto."[34]

The relaxed atmosphere was rudely interrupted by the flood of 1852 which came only 18 inches short of reaching the height of the disaster of 1826. The lower fort, well above the flood waters, became a refuge for those at the upper fort: Major Caldwell's family and servants, Mrs. Pelly, and Mrs. Mills from the school all came down to live at the lower end of the house. During the flood, which lasted throughout most of the month of May, Colvile travelled weekly to the upper settlement in a small canoe. His visits were a source of inspiration, especially for the Bishop of Rupert's Land who determined to stay out the flood in his own lodging.

5 May, About 4 P.M. Governor Colvile passed down in a birch-rind canoe, borne rapidly along the stream. His cheerfulness was animating to us all.[35]

Shortly after the flood waters subsided, the news became public that the Colviles would be leaving the settlement and returning to England. "Heard soon after, with regret," wrote the Bishop of Rupert's Land, "that Governor and Mrs. Colvile are likely to leave the country. We feel indebted to them for much personal kindness; and the settlement in general will, we are sure, feel the loss. The Governor is about to start for the Council at Norway House, and then only returns to take Mrs. Colvile through Canada. . . . In the evening I rode down to the Lower Fort, as the only opportunity I might have of bidding the Goverror farewell, as I may probably have left before his return from Norway House."[36] Colvile attended the council meeting, made arrangements shifting the responsibility for the Northern Department back to Simpson and then set out for Montreal with his wife. By October, Colvile was back in England.

The reasons for the hasty departure of the Colviles are not readily apparent, although many possibilities could be suggested. Simpson was forced to postpone his plans to go to London in the fall of 1850 because of the illness of his wife, Frances. Her continuing ill-health (she died in 1853) may have prompted him to abandon the shift in headquarters completely. Also, while Colvile was in the country, the Governor of the Company, J.H. Pelly, died and Andrew Colvile, the Deputy Governor, may have wanted his son at home to assist in the managing of the Company affairs. Finally there is a remote possibility that Anne Colvile, who was pregnant and never fond of the country, may have insisted that they return to England to have the child.

On his return to England, Colvile used his experience in the country to good advantage. "He held many directorships. . .and from 1872 to 1880 he was Deputy Governor, from 1880 to 1889 Governor, of the Hudson's Bay Company."[37]

Artifacts Associated with Eden Colvile

The Colviles appear to have called upon at least four sources in the furnishing of their apartment: a) London (or home), b) Montreal, c) Red River, and d) York Factory.

a) at least two large shipments were sent out from home to the Colviles. In the fall of 1850, Andrew Colvile's shipment of a quantity of goods arrived at York Factory with the two English servants. Some of these articles were specified in Colvile's letter to Simpson (see list below) but a large quantity of goods did not appear on the inven-

tory. The following year another lot of goods arrived from England, this time including a piano. Unfortunately it is not known specifically what was sent out at that time. Both Colvile and his wife probably brought articles of clothing and furnishings when they came, he in 1849 and she in the summer of 1850.

b) From Montreal came files of newspapers which Colvile asked Simpson to send and also small articles (unspecified) which Colvile had sent up for his wife. Because Anne Colvile came originally from Montreal and Eden Colvile had spent five years there from 1844 to 1849, a number of their possessions could be expected to come from that place.

c) From the stores in Red River, the Colviles obtained most of their daily supplies – food, wine, household articles. The variety of goods which were available to them was extensive, in effect, anything which was stocked in the sale shops: lamps, cloth of many types and colours, Drugget carpeting, earthenware dishes, cutlery, and so on.

The Company also supplied a great deal of the furniture used in the Colvile apartment. It was the policy of the Company to supply the basic pieces of furniture for the dwelling houses of its officers, although this was in most cases supplemented by better furniture added by the officer out of his own pocket. In the case of the Big House at Lower Fort Garry, the furnishings were probably elaborate in the beginning, for the house was first intended for the use of Simpson and his wife. After 1831-32, some of the furnishings may have been shifted to the upper fort. In 1849, when the house was prepared for the occupancy of the Bishop of Rupert's Land, the furnishings then in the house were not considered to be up to his standard of living. The shortage of furniture was corrected in 1849-50 when John Ballenden had a quantity of furniture made, some of which was apparently used by Colvile.

In Consequence of the greater part of the furniture at Fort Garry having been made over to Major Caldwell, there was not sufficient for the use of the Company's officers Conducting the Commercial affairs at the Settlement. To supply this deficiency and in order that the residence of the Company's representative might make a respectable appearance, Mr. Ballenden had new furniture made, the cost of which about sixty pounds. . . .The furniture in question I understand is required in order to complete the domestic appointments of the establishment for the use of yourself and the Company's officers in the settlement.[38]

The items of furniture are listed below. These would supplement the existing supply of furniture.

d) William Mactavish sent down a cask of port and other articles (unspecified) from the York Factory depot in 1851.

Books, magazines, newspapers

Books were sent by Andrew Colvile in 1850. These are not specified but were requested by Eden Colvile. In addition, Colvile had books with him when he was on the West Coast for the winter 1849-50. These were sent forward when he moved to the Red River. Some of these were repacked at Fort Colvile and we therefore have a record; others, however, may have been sent on in an unopened box. The books were "a good deal chafed."[39]

–	1 vol.	Life of Sir T. Munro
–	1 do.	Sir John Sutherlandshire
–	1 do.	Edinburgh Review
–	1 do.	Quarterly Review
–		"old files of the Times"
–	3 Nos.	David Copperfield
–		A Series of Punch
–	2 Nos.	Edinburgh Advertiser

In May, 1850, Colvile requested Simpson to send "a file of the Montreal newspapers."[40]

Carpets

"Carpeting" was one of the items sent out by Andrew Colvile to his son in 1850.[41] See also Ballenden list below.

Crockery-ware, glass

A sufficiency of crockery ware & glass for dinner, tea & coffee, for twelve people . . . . was sent out by Andrew Colvile.

Linen and table and furniture coverings

Andrew Colvile sent out "some house linen & table linen – and some printed cottons for furniture . . . ."

Curiosities

Eden Colvile seems to have been interested in the collection of curiosities while in the country. In 1850, he had eight little ivory figures sent from Fort Simpson. "I do myself the pleasure of forwarding to your address the eight little figures we promised to get made for you.

The ivory which is the best we could get, is not of good quality, nor are they so well made as we could wish though the best worker among the Indians here was employed. Should a chance arise of getting ones of better ivory, and better made, we shall avail ourselves of it. We have nothing else in the shape of a curiosity worth your acceptance, portable enough to send by the express."[42]

Furniture

In addition to furniture which may have existed in the Big House up to 1849-50 Colvile also received a portion of the furniture which Ballenden had made in 1850:

C. F. Ballenden to be credited with 56.10.4 for sundry articles of furniture transferred to the Company as per account herewith:
91 yds. Kidderminster carpeting.
30 " " "
3 Square dining tables
2 half round " Do (ends)
1 side board
3 round tables
1 side table with drawers
1 large desk with drawers
4 arm chairs
1 sofa
2 bed steads
2 tubs
1 tea urn
50 yds. white Dimity
3 toilet covers
1 table cover[43]

By the fall ship of 1851, a quantity of goods arrived including a piano which were sent to Red River.

Portmanteau

In the summer of 1851 a portmanteau was sent to Colvile by Simpson, presumably from Montreal."I am much obliged to you for the trouble you took in sending the portmanteau by the Lakes. The things all arrived safely, and were very acceptable."[44]

Endnotes

A New Establishment

1 Grace Lee Nute, ed., "Journey for Frances," *The Beaver*, Outfit 285 (June 1954), p. 15. For details of the Simpsons' journey, *see* Appendix B.
2 Ibid.
3 Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter cited as HBCA), Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 10 April 1831, p. 64, B. 135/c/2.
4 Ibid., p. 65, B. 135/c/2.
5 Ibid., 19 July 1832, p. 85, B. 135/c/2.
6 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – George Simpson (hereafter cited as London Inward), Simpson to Governor and Committee, 10 August 1832, p. 424, A.12/1.
7 James Hargrave, *The Hargrave Correspondence, 1821-1843* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), Thomas Simpson to Hargrave, 19 December 1832, pp. 95-7.
8 Much of this information may have been taken from the Donald Ross papers in the B.C. Archives to which M.A. MacLeod had access. "Life at the Fort that first winter was gay with 'brilliant fêtes for the Red River gentry' and musical evenings – with Frances at the piano, clerks playing the fiddle and flute, and all joining in the chorus. The Governor watched over two new buildings going up and reported that LeBlanc dined with them 'on Sundays when he has his clean things on'. Thomas Simpson (son of George's foster mother and now his secretary) told of 'racing blood horses on the frozen river' and of 'the Gov. and his Lady driving out tandem at a terrible rate in a cariole emblazoned with the Comany's Arms'." Margaret A. MacLeod, *Lower Fort Garry* (Winnipeg: privately printed, 1957), p. 6.
9 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 4 May 1833, p. 100, B.135/c/2.
10 *See* Appendix B for the Simpsons in later years.
11 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 95-7.

12 Ibid., pp. 120-1, T. Simpson to Hargrave, 13 December 1833.

13 Alexander Simpson, *Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic Discoverer* (London: Bentley, 1845), T. Simpson to A. Simpson as quoted on p. 93.

14 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 187-8, T. Simpson to Hargrave, 27 February 1835. Leblanc and his family probably lived in the house at the lower fort while the others were at the forks with Simpson. "LeBlanc, the wife, and your young folks are quite well and living at the New Fort; we are this season at the old Establish[t]." HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 22 December 1834, p. 139, B.135/c/2.

15 HBCA, Governor George Simpson Correspondence Inward (hereafter cited as Simpson Inward), Duncan Finlayson to Simpson, 1 May 1841, p. 138, D.5/6. The construction of the annex may have been made necessary by the occupancy of a part of the Big House by Adam Thom and his wife.

16 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 16 April 1845, p. 427, D.5/13.

17 Ibid., Christie to Simpson, 25 May 1846, p. 287, D.5/7. In June, 1846, Christie wrote to Simpson at the lower fort, "Messrs. Ross and Hargrave are here, but the Columbia Gentlemen have not made their appearance. We may however hourly look for their arrival and we shall all be ready to go down by Boat as soon as you may require our attendance. . .I merely mention this [unrest in the settlement]. . .that in the present state of affairs, and the advanced period of the Season, the departure of the Gentlemen to their respective charges may be facilitated by holding the council at the lower Fort." Ibid., Christie to Simpson, 4 June 1846, p. 335, D.5/17.

18 Ibid., Christie to Simpson, 28 November 1848, p. 372, D.5/23. Earlier Christie had written to say that he planned to stay in the Big House himself: "With reference to my own residence for next winter, it appears to be under existing circumstances, that the only vacant place, would be the rooms formerly occupied by Mr. Thom and recently by Captain Moody in the lower fort and which should the Military return, would not be required." Ibid., Christie to Simpson, 18 August 1848, p. 523, D.5/22. Christie finally stayed in the cottage to the south of the fort.

19 *See* Appendix D for a biography of Thom.

20 HBCA, Governor George Simpson Correspondence Books Outward (General) (hereafter cited as Simpson Outward), Simpson to Finlayson, 1 March 1840, D.4/25.

21 Thom claimed that the Company should be responsible for his mess and quarters using his sojourn at the Big House as a precedent. Simpson, rather annoyed, wrote to him in 1851, "When in 1839, I found there was unoccupied house room at the Lower Fort, as a matter of personal good feeling, I allowed you to take possession of a portion of the main house, subject as it was well understood, to remove at pleasure. In these free quarters you remained for seven years." HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Thom, 10 December 1851, p. 81, D.4/44.

22 HBCA, Winnipeg, Miscellaneous Items, memo to John Black, 2 July 1853, p. 452, B.235/z/3.

Sixth Regiment of Foot

1 For an account of the Sixth Regiment, *see* William Morrison's paper, "The Sixth Regiment of Foot at Lower Fort Garry," in this issue.

2 Simpson to Barclay, 24 December 1845, as quoted in Dale Miquelon, *Lower Fort Garry: Preliminary Research Report* (Ottawa: National Historic Sites Service, 1964), p. 25. The Company apparently moved out all furnishings when it vacated the fort. When Crofton arrived in the fall of 1846, he was forced to sleep on the floor when he stopped off at the lower fort, "as the Lower Fort had no accommodation, all having been removed, and the Fort given over to Captain Beatty for the troops." Canada. Public Archives (hereafter cited as PAC), MG12, WO1, Vol. 557, pp. 199-219, Crofton to Somerset, 15 September 1846.

3 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 13 May 1847, p. 555, D.5/19.

4 Ibid., Moody to Simpson, pp. 386-9, D.5/18.

5 Ibid., Christie to Simpson, 28 November 1848, p. 373, D.5/23.

The Bishop of Rupert's Land

1 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to John Ballenden, 28 June 1849, p. 66, D.4/39.

2 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Christie to Simpson, 24 July 1849, p. 403, D.5/25.

3 The bishop's party received preferred treatment at York at the request of Simpson. "The Governor ordered that the Bishop should receive kid glove treatment writing to Hargrave: 'Pray take care that there are no drunken scenes at York at any time – more especially when the Bishop passes . . .and do not let the Brigades start on Sundays. . . .' Hargrave had also asked Ballenden for 'as large a store of Colony comforts as you can spare for the service of the Bishop'." Letitia Hargrave, *The Letters of Letitia Hargrave*, ed., Margaret A. MacLeod (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1947), pp. cxxiii - iv.

4 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Ballenden to Simpson, 29 November 1849, p. 625, D.5/26. The bishop wrote to Simpson in January to express his appreciation for the arrangements at the lower fort: "When I last wrote to you it was to thank you for all the arrangements, which you had made with a view to my comfort at the Lower Fort, I can only say that on our arrival we found all ___ equal to our expectations and could have spent the winter there most happily had not unexpected circumstances led me to feel that it would be my duty to remove to this part of the settlement. . . .Had I remained at the stone fort, I might have passed the winter in quiet retirement, preparing for future work . . . .Let me once more beg you to accept my warmest thanks for the arrangements made for my reception and accom-

modation." David Rupert's Land to Simpson, 30 January 1850, pp. 173-4, D.5/27.

5 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Thom to Simpson, 22 November 1849, p. 558, D.5/26.

6 Sarah Tucker, *The Rainbow in the North* (London: Nisbet, 1851), p. 189.

7 Ibid.

Eden Colvile

1 For more detail of Colvile's stay in Red River, *see* Appendix E.

2 Eden Colvile, *London Correspondence Inward from Eden Colvile, 1849-1852*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956), p. 193, Colvile to Simpson, 15 August 1850.

3 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Ballenden to Simpson, 24 August 1850, p. 487, D.5/28.

4 Eden Colvile, op. cit., Appendix, p. 201, Colvile to Simpson, 4 January 1851.

5 Ibid., p. 204, 7 February 1851.

6 Ibid., p. 211, 22 May 1851.

7 As quoted in Robert Watson, *Lower Fort Garry, a History of the Stone Fort* (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Company, 1928), p. 17.

8 Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. 260, Colvile to Simpson, 26 May 1852.

9 PAC, MG19, A40, W. D. Lane Correspondence Outward, 1851-73, Lane to his mother, 22 August 1854.

10 PAC, MG19, A40, 1A, Lane Correspondence Inward, Logan to Lane, 13 December 1854.

11 Ibid., John Ballenden to Lane, 8 February 1855.

12 Ibid., 12 February 1855.

13 Ibid., 14 February 1855.

14 Ibid., no date.

15 F.G. Johnson who replaced Adam Thom as Recorder of Rupert's Land, was given quarters in the upper fort. In 1855, however, Simpson learned that Johnson might marry and bring his wife west with him. In the event of his marrying he would be given quarters in the Big House at the lower fort. "I have been informed that there is a probability of your getting married in the course of the ensuing spring, previous to the date appointed for my visit to Red River and as such change in your conditions would of course terminate the arrangement merely temporary whereby you are furnished with rooms in Fort Garry and a seat at the Company's Mess Table. I consider it advisable to state at once the accommodation that will be afforded you in the event of your taking a wife, so that should that event occur before [sic] my visit Mr. Ballenden may carry out the new arrangements. It will be necessary for you to remove to the Lower Fort where you will be put in occupation of the rooms Mr. Thom inhabited for several years & Mr. Ballenden will further provide the requisite Kitchen accommodation. You will have to provide your own table & servants and to furnish your apartments. Mr. Ballenden will arrange the details & should any point arise not now forseen it can be disposed of when I have the pleasure of seeing you next summer." HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Johnson, 12 February 1855, p. 18, D.4/50.

Johnson does not appear to have moved into the lower fort. In 1858, when Johnson went east, Simpson again made arrangements for his accommodation at the lower fort in the event of his return. "If Mr. Johnson returns to Red River alone furnish him two rooms and a kitchen (say those occupied by Mr. Thom) at the Lower Fort with Stabling and forage for one horse. To mess himself. If he brings back his family he may have all the rooms Mr. Thom occupied unfurnished." Ibid., Memo to Mactavish, 9 June 1858, p. 155, D.4/54.

16 Ibid., Simpson to Ballenden, 15 June 1855, p. 53, D.4/50.

17 Ibid., Memo to Chief Factor Swanston, 28 June 1855, pp. 68-9, D.4/50.

The Years at Mid-Century

1 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from Governors of H.B.C. Territories – William Mactavish, Mactavish to Fraser, 29 January 1862, p. 202, A.12/42.

2 Roderick Campbell, *The Father of St. Kilda* (London: Russell, 1901), pp. 112-3.

3 S. Hubbard Scudder, *The Winnipeg Country* (New York: Hodges, 1890), pp. 119-20.

4 H. M. Robinson, *The Great Fur Land* (London: Sampson, Low, 1879), pp. 73-4.

William Flett

1 *See* Dale Miquelon, "A Brief History of Lower Fort Garry," this issue, for an account of the uprising.

2 Ibid.

3 HBCA, Lower Fort Garry, Post Journal, 1868-74, (hereafter cited as Journal), 6 September 1870, B.303/a/1.

4 The routine of the fort does not appear to have changed much from Lane's period: "The life at the fort was a simple but happy one. The business in a way was conducted on military lines. At six a.m. when the fort bell rang, everyone started out to their several occupations; at seven-thirty the bell rang and everyone went to breakfast. (Mr. Flett made his round of inspection between six and seven-thirty a.m.). The bell was again sounded at eight-thirty and everyone returned to work. One o'clock the dinner bell rang; two o'clock work again. At five o'clock, Mr. Flett again made his rounds. At six o'clock the bell rang and everything was closed for the day. On Saturdays the bell rang at five o'clock, the closing hour for that day so as to give the men time to get their supplies."

A. T. Cowley, "Lower Fort Garry in 1868," *The Beaver*, Outfit 265 (September 1934), p. 40.

5 HBCA, Journal, 24 July 1871.

6 Ibid., 14 September 1871. The Council apparently continued after Smith departed. The journal entry for 20 September notes, "Several of the Gentlemen went away from here, Council being ended for the present." This was a very significant meeting for the Deed Poll, the means of determining the shares of the officers of the Company, was then under consideration. Smith was probably reporting on the position of the Governor and Committee.

See G.F.G. Stanley, "Fur Trade Party," *The*

Beaver, Outfit 284 (September 1953), pp. 35-9.

7 HBCA, Journal, 20 January 1872. "Flora Hope cleaning rooms for Governor Smith."

8 Ibid., 28 December 1872.

9 As quoted in Dale Miquelon, *Lower Fort Garry: Preliminary Research Report* (Ottawa: National Historic Sites Service, 1964).

10 HBCA, Journal, 8 December 1873. "Messrs. Hamilton, J.H. McTavish, Parson & [G.S.] McTavish and some others came down on a visit and had a dance in the evening."

11 HBCA, London Inward Correspondence from H.B.C. Posts – Winnipeg, Copy of letter, Hamilton to Grahame dated Carlton House, 19 August 1875, enclosure in letter from Grahame to Armit, dated Fort Garry, 4 November 1875, pp. 614d-7d, A.12/16.

12 Ibid., Grahame to Armit, 19 May 1876, p. 101, A.12/17.

13 HBCA, Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame, Correspondence Outward to Officers and Servants, Grahame to G.S. McTavish, 1 November 1876, p. 145, D.13/10.

Lord Dufferin

1 Ibid., Grahame to Flett, 13 August 1877, p. 502, D.13/10.

2 HBCA, Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame, Correspondence Inward (General), Flett to Grahame, 21 August 1877, D.14/17.

3 HBCA, Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame, Correspondence Outward to Officers and Servants, Grahame to Flett, 1 September 1877, pp. 543-4, D.13/10.

A Retreat for Chief Commissioners

1 Wrigley's obituary in the *Beaver* stated: "Joseph Wrigley passed away in February last at his home at Kensington Park Gardens, London, England, at the age of 87. He was born in Yorkshire, England, on February 3rd, 1839.

"In 1874 he was president of the Huddersfield Chamber of Commerce and was a participant in several important commercial missions to Russia and France.

"In 1884 he received the appointment of Trade Commissioner in Winnipeg for the Hudson's Bay Company in succession to Jas. A. Grahame.

"During Mr. Wrigley's period of office, the Saskatchewan rebellion of 1885 took place, and he was instrumental in placing the resources of the Company and the services of its officers at the disposal of the Dominion for the suppression of the disturbance.

"He presided over the last Council meeting in Canada of the Company's factors held in the Queen's Hotel, Winnipeg, in 1887.

"Mr. Wrigley held office continuously until 1891, when he was granted six months' sick leave, and at the expiry of this time was evidently not well enough to resume his duties, as on May 12th, 1891, he was succeeded by Mr. C.C. Chipman as Trade Commissioner." *The Beaver,* Vol. 6, No. 3 (June 1926), p. 122.

2 William Flett died in 1883 and was replaced by a clerk, F.W. Holloway. Chief Trader W.J. McLean assumed the charge in 1886 and moved in with his large family. He came there directly after his captivity by the Indians at Fort Pitt. McLean presided over a brief renaissance of the fort until 1892, and then was asked for his resignation. Two clerks, J. B. Parker and J. E. O'Meara followed and in 1894, J. H. Stanger received the charge and remained until the fort's closing. Stanger's daughter survives and retains memories of her period in the house.

3 Chipman was born at Amherst, N.S., on 24 May 1856. He was first employed in the civil service of Canada in the departments of Public Works and Finance. When Sir Charles Tupper was appointed High Commissioner in 1884, Chipman accompanied him as private secretary. In Tupper's absence he served as executive commissioner, and he accompanied Tupper to Washington for negotiations with the United States. In 1890, he returned to the civil service and became chief clerk in the Department of Marine and Fisheries. In 1891, at the age of thirty-five, he was appointed Trade Commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company. As commissioner he did much to modernize the operations of the Company in Canada. He retired as commissioner in 1911 and went to England, living first at Woodlands, in Roehampton, Surrey, and in 1923 moved to Arnathwaite House, Leamington Spa. He died at the age of 68, 11 February 1924. "He was [so states his obituary] a man of medium height, neat in appearance and alert in his actions; a man of great energy and ability, a keen sportsman and an enthusiastic horseman. His tact and diplomacy often stood him in great stead and won for him time and again the object he had in view." *The Beaver,* Vol. 4, No. 6 (March 1924) pp. 218-9.

4 Hamilton B. Chipman, "Boyhood at the Lower Fort," *The Beaver,* Outfit 287 (Autumn 1956), pp. 9-14.

Appendix B: George and Frances Simpson

1 Simpson also acted as Governor of the Southern Department after 1826 and was appointed Governor in Chief in 1839.

2 For detail of Simpson's movements in the 1820s, *see* Arthur S. Morton, *Sir George Simpson, Overseas Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company; A Pen Picture of a Man of Action* (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1944).

3 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 26 January 1830, p. 42, B.135/c/2. The Simpson-McTavish correspondence is unique among the surviving letters of Simpson. The two traders struck up a surprisingly intimate relationship which allowed Simpson to write in a personal manner not found elsewhere. It reveals an aspect of his character which is indiscernible in the Governor's cold official correspondence.

4 Grace Lee Nute, ed., "Journey for Frances," *The Beaver,* Outfit 284 (December 1953), pp. 50-4; (March 1954), pp. 12-7; Outfit 285 (Summer 1954), pp. 12-8. Frances Simpson kept a diary during her journey

from England to Red River, excerpts of which have been published as noted above.

5 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to McKenzie, 6 July 1830, p. 22, D.4/17. Simpson was quite pleased with his quarters in Red River. He later wrote: "We are tolerably (?) well quartered, have 4 rooms and a kitchen, and Leblanc has made them passably habitable." HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 3 January 1831, p. 54, B.135/c/2.

6 Grace Lee Nute, ed., op. cit., (Summer 1954), p. 15.

7 R. Harvey Fleming and E. E. Rich, eds., *Minutes of Council, Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-1831.* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1940), p. 258, July 1830.

8 Grace Lee Nute, ed., op. cit., pp. 17-8.

9 James Hargrave, op. cit., Alexander Ross to James Hargrave, 18 December, pp. 59-62.

10 Ibid., pp. 58-9, James McMillan to James Hargrave, 15 December 1830.

11 *See* n. 9 above.

12 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 3 January 1831, p. 54, B.135/c/2.

13 Ibid., 3-11 January 1831, p. 57, B.135/c/2.

14 Ibid., 10 April 1831, p. 62, B.135/c/2.

15 Ibid., p. 64, B.135/c/2.

16 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 67-9, John Stuart to James Hargrave, 15 March 1831.

17 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 20 May 1831, p. 66, B.135/c/2.

18 Ibid., 7 July 1831, p. 70, B.135/c/2.

19 HBCA, London Inward, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 18 July 1831, p. 377, A.12/1.

20 PAC, MG19, A25, Robert Campbell, *From the Highlands to Fort Garry,* p. 7. For construction information, *see* Dale Miquelon, "A Brief History of Lower Fort Garry," this issue.

21 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 10 April 1831, p. 65, B.135/c/2.

22 HBCA, London Inward, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 18 July 1831, p. 377, A.12/1.

23 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 15 August 1831, p. 73, B.135/c/2. Simpson also talked of his servants. "Our cook is first rate at her trade," and was very attached to Mrs. Simpson. Angus, her husband, was "a finished servant," and fine now that Simpson had put him in line. "Mary is the best tempered creature you ever saw and is quite a treasure to her mistress and on the whole our home is very snug and comfortable menage." Ibid., p. 74.

24 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 3 January 1832, pp. 76-7, B.135/c/2.

25 James Hargrave, op. cit., p. 85, James McMillan to James Hargrave, 12 December 1831.

26 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 3 January 1832, p. 81, B.135/c/2.

27 Ibid., 1 May 1832, p. 83 ff., B.135/c/2.

28 Ibid., 19 July 1832, p. 85, B.135/c/2.

29 HBCA, London Inward, Simpson to Governor and Committee, 10 August 1832, p. 424, A.12/1.

30 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 95-7, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, 19 December 1832.

31 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 2 December 1832, p. 94, B.135/c/2. There was apparently some light-hearted enjoyment. *See* Margaret A. MacLeod, op. cit.

32 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 4 May 1833, p. 100, B.135/c/2.

33 Ibid., 29 June 1833, p. 105 ff., B.135/c/2.

34 James Hargrave, op. cit., p. 115, J. D. Cameron (Fort Alexander) to James Hargrave, 2 December 1833.

35 HBCA, Moose Factory: Correspondence Inward, Simpson to McTavish, 21 October 1833, p. 113 ff., B.135/c/2.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 10 January 1834, p. 116, B.135/c/2.

38 Ibid., 22 December 1834, p. 139, B.135/c/2.

39 George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World During the Years 1841 and 1842* (London: Colburn, 1847), Vol. 1, p. 55.

40 E.E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1958), Vol. 2, p. 467, quoting John McLean.

41 Clifford P. Wilson, "Sir George Simpson at Lachine," *The Beaver,* Outfit 265 (June 1934), pp. 36-9. On 23 September 1833, the Hudson's Bay Company bought the house from William Gordon of Lachine.

42 Isobel Finlayson, "York Boat Journal," *The Beaver,* Outfit 282 (December 1951), p. 37.

43 Ibid., p. 35.

44 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 433-5, Angus Cameron to James Hargrave, 25 April 1843.

45 Finlayson was appointed to Lachine in 1844, and remained there until he retired in 1855. He was re-appointed in 1859 but retired again in the same year. George Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences in the Athabaska Department by George Simpson, 1820 and 1821, and Report* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), pp. 437-8.

46 Letitia Hargrave, *The Letters of Letitia Hargrave* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1947), note, p. xciv.

47 Ibid.

48 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Black, 18 December 1850, pp. 79-80, D.4/42.

49 Letitia Hargrave, op. cit., note, p. xciv, Finlayson to Donald Ross, 30 April 1852.

Appendix C: Thomas Simpson

1 For details of Simpson's early life, *see* Alexander Simpson, *Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, The Arctic Discover* (London: Bentley, 1845).

2 As quoted in ibid., p. 75.

3 As quoted in "The HBC Packet," *The Beaver,* Outfit 266 (June 1935), p. 5.

4 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 95-7, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, 19 December 1832.

5 As quoted in Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 80.

6 Ibid., p. 78.

7 Ibid., pp. 78-9.

8 Ibid., p. 84.
9 This seems to have been the case in both 1832-33 when George Simpson wintered in Red River and 1833-34, the season now in question.
10 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 120-1, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, 13 December 1833.
11 As quoted in Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 93, Thomas Simpson to Alexander Simpson, 7 March 1834.
12 James Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 187-8, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, 27 February 1835.
13 Ibid.
14 For details, *see* Alexander Simpson, op. cit., and E.E. Rich, op. cit., Vol. 2, especially pp. 647-50.
15 Alexander Simpson, op. cit., pp. 226-7, Thomas Simpson to Alexander Simpson, 30 November 1836. Simpson probably stayed at the lower fort at least part of the time that he was preparing for the northern expedition. In August, for instance, he wrote to Hargrave from "New Fort Garry." This could refer either to the new fort under construction at the forks, or to the lower fort which was still relatively new. *See* James Hargrave, op. cit., p. 241, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, 11 August 1836.
16 As quoted in Alexander Simpson, op. cit., pp. 226-7, Thomas Simpson to Alexander Simpson, 30 November 1836.
17 E.E. Rich, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 648; Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 277.
18 As quoted in Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 244, Report of Dease and Simpson to Governor and Committee, 5 September 1837.
19 Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 257, Thomas Simpson to Alexander Simpson.
20 As quoted in Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 275, Thomas Simpson to Alexander Simpson, 29 January 1838. Most of the information for the Simpson-Dease expedition has been taken from the reports and letters quoted above.
21 Alexander Simpson, op. cit., p. 297, Simpson's narrative of his journey on foot.
22 Ibid., p. 287, Report of Dease and Simpson, 15 September 1838.
23 Ibid., p. 321, Report to the Governor and Committee, 16 October 1839.
24 Ibid., p. 330.
25 Ibid., pp. 346, 349.
26 This is the interpretation advanced by W. Kaye Lamb in Douglas MacKay and W. Kaye Lamb, "More Light on Thomas Simpson," *The Beaver*, Outfit 269 (September 1938), pp. 26-31.
27 George B. Greenough, "The President's Address on Presenting Medals," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 9 (1839), p. xi-xii. The *Journal* also published "An Account of Arctic Discovery on the Northern Shore of America in the Summer of 1838, by Messrs. Peter Warren Dease and Thomas Simpson," Vol. 9, pp. 325-30. The Society later noted Simpson's tragic death: "The discovery of a north-west passage, which has flattered and disappointed the hopes of so many generations, still remains incomplete. The sad fate of the intrepid and indefatigable Simpson, to whom one of the royal medals was awarded last year, and who seemed of all men living the most likely to solve the problem, is generally known, and the subject is much too painful to be unnecessarily dwelt upon." Ibid., "Address to the Royal Geographical Society of London," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 11 (1841), p. xl.

Appendix D: Adam Thom

1 Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. lx. W.L. Morton's introduction has been used extensively.
2 For details of Adam Thom's early life, *see Adam Thom, 1802-1890* (n.p., n.d.), which contains a paper of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 1890; *also* Roy St. George Stubbs, *Four Recorders of Rupert's Land; A Brief Survey of the Hudson's Bay Company Courts of Rupert's Land* (Winnipeg: Pegus, 1967).
3 Edmund H. Oliver, ed., *The Canadian North-West, its Early Development and Legislative Records* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1914-15), Vol. 1, pp. 63-4.
4 As quoted in Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. lx
5 *See* n. 3.
6 *See* HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Finlayson, 1 March 1840, D.4/25; *also* Records of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 1890, as quoted in *Adam Thom, 1802-1890* (n.p., n.d.).
7 These can be found scattered through Simpson's correspondence in the H.B.C. Archives. If any major work is undertaken on Thom's career in Red River, these should be consulted.
8 For an account of the trial, *see* Eden Colvile, op. cit., pp. lxxxiii-lxxxvi.
9 Ibid., p. lxxxvii; *also* Edmund H. Oliver, ed., op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 352.
10 Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. lxxxix.
11 Ibid., p. ci.
12 For an account of the Foss/Pelly case, *see* ibid., pp. ci - civ.
13 *See* Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. cvii. The Deed of Revocation was given to Thom 10 April 1851. *See* ibid., p. 58, Colvile to A. Barclay, 4 June 1851.
14 Ibid., p. 208, Colvile to Simpson, 22 May 1851.
15 Ibid., pp. 160-1, n., Governor and Committee to Simpson, 6 April 1853.
16 Thom died in 1890 at the ripe old age of 87.
17 Roy St. George Stubbs, op. cit.

Appendix E: Eden Colvile, "The Young Commercial Patrician"

1 Most of the information concerning Colvile's life before arriving at Lower Fort Garry was taken from W.L. Morton's excellent introduction to Eden Colvile, *London Correspondence Inward from Eden Colvile, 1849-1852*, eds., E. E. Rich and A. M. Johnson (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956).
2 As quoted in ibid., p. xcvi.
3 Maxwell was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Fifteenth Regiment who asked for and apparently obtained permission to retire in the country.
4 As quoted in Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. xcvi.
5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.
7 HBCA, York Factory, Correspondence Books, A. B. Sey to Eden Colvile, 4 April 1849, p. 1, B.239/b/125.
8 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Sinclair, 18 December 1850, p. 84, D.4/42.
9 HBCA, Simpson Inward, J.H. Pelly to Simpson, 12 January 1849, p. 65, D.5/24.
0 For a very good account of Red River in this period, *see* W.L. Morton's introduction to Eden Colvile, op. cit.
11 HBCA, Simpson Inward, A. Colvile to Simpson, 25 January 1850, p. 142, D.5/27.
12 Ibid., 3 March 1850, p. 143, D.5/27.
13 Ibid., 12 April 1850, p. 72, D.5/28.
14 HBCA, York Factory: Correspondence Inward, W. G. Smith to James Hargrave, 28 May 1850 (post note dated 7 June 1850), p. 279, B.239/c/5.
15 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Colvile to Simpson, 26 August 1850, p. 500, D.5/28.
16 Ibid., 15 August 1850, p. 443, D.5/28.
17 Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. 196, Colvile to Simpson, 26 August 1850.
18 Ibid.
19 HBCA, York Factory: Bills of Lading, goods shipped from York Factory to Red River, York Factory, 26 August 1850, p. 124, B.239/w/3. The servants were described by Letitia Hargrave: "The fort is not so gay this season as it was last time, but we have a number of obscure people from home .... There are last of all a 'Mr. and Mrs. Deans' from Londn. who are on their way to Rd. Rr. as valet & lady's maid to the new Govr. & his wife, Mr & Mrs Colvile who are to winter at Lower Fort Garry Red River. This woman seems very suitable. I have seen her repeatedly & have always parted from her with increased approbation. She has been married for 17 years, has no family, & works like a slave both for herself and her mess mate, the genteel one, who looks at her as if she expected danger from her neighbourhood." (Letitia Hargrave, op. cit., pp. 253-4, Letitia Hargrave to Mrs. Dugald Mactavish, 27 August 1850.)
20 HBCA, York Factory: Correspondence Inward, Ballenden to Hargrave, 5 August 1850, p. 413, B.239/c/5.
21 Eden Colvile, op. cit., pp. 205-6, and n., p. 206, Colvile to Simpson, 7 February 1851.
22 Ibid., p. 196, Colvile to Simpson, 26 August 1850.
23 Ibid., p. 231, Colvile to Simpson, 14 July 1851.
24 Ibid., p. cvi.
25 HBCA, Simpson Inward, Black to Simpson, 29 September 1851, pp. 542-3, D.5/31.
26 HBCA, York Factory: Correspondence Inward, Colvile to Hargrave, 4 September 1850, p. 442, B.239/c/5.
27 HBCA, Simpson Outward, Simpson to Black, 18 December 1850, pp. 79-80, D.4/42.
28 HBCA, York Factory: Post Journals, 5 July 1851, p. 47, B.239/a/176.
29 Eden Colvile, op. cit., p. 241, Colvile to Simpson, 10 August 1851.
30 HBCA, York Factory: Correspondence Inward, W. G. Smith to Mactavish, 7 June 1851, p. 59, B.239/c/6.
31 HBCA, Governor Eden Colvile Correspondence Inward, William Mactavish to Colvile, 3 September 1851, p. 168, D.7/1.
32 HBCA, York Factory: Bills of Lading, 28 August 1851, p. 207, B.239/w/3.
33 HBCA, Governor Eden Colvile Correspondence Inward, William Mactavish to Colvile, 16 February 1852, pp. 223-4, D.7/1.
34 John Rae, *John Rae's Correspondence with the Hudson's Bay Company on Arctic Exploration, 1844-1855* (London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1953), p. 220, Rae to Simpson, 9 March 1852.
35 David Anderson, *Notes of the Flood at Red River, 1852* (London: Hatchard's, n.d.), p. 16.
36 Ibid., p. 106.
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The Sixth Regiment of Foot at Lower Fort Garry

by William R. Morrison

1 View of Lower Fort Garry from the opposite bank, sketched in 1847 by George Finlay (*Glenbow Foundation.*).

Abstract

The Sixth, or Royal First Warwickshire Regiment of Foot was sent to Lower Fort Garry during 1846-48 to protect British interests in the threat of war between Britain and the United States. The danger proved to be illusory, and the attack against which the regiment stood guard never came.

Early History of the Regiment

The Sixth, or Royal First Warwickshire Regiment of Foot, had already compiled a notable military record by the time its second battalion arrived on the Red River in the summer of 1846, for the history of the regiment went back well into the 17th century.

The regiment had been originally one of those raised in England for service in a foreign country, in this case The Netherlands. A history of the regiment published in 1839 describes its origins.

During the negociations for the peace of London in the winter of 1673-4, the States General [of The Netherlands] *pressed King Charles II. to recall his troops from the service of France, and solicited permission again to employ in their army a British division. The King refused to recall his regiments from France; but his majesty engaged not to permit any additional British corps to be levied for the service of Louis XIV., and to prevent the others being recruited: at the same time permission was given to the States to raise for their service a body of troops in England and Scotland, to be commanded by the Colonel of the old HOLLAND REGIMENT, SIR WALTER VANE, who was promoted to the rank of major-general in the Dutch army, and appointed colonel of one of the regiments to be raised for this service, now the SIXTH REGIMENT OF FOOT, his commission bearing date the 12th of December, 1673.*[1]

The regiment came to England with William III in 1688, and subsequently was

2 Five soldiers in winter dress, Upper Fort Garry, as sketched by George Finlay. The guard wears a buffalo skin coat (*Glenbow Foundation.*).

involved in the subjugation of Ireland. The wide range of services of the regiment up to the 1840s is indicated by the honours which it bore on its colours: "Roleia," "Vittoria," "Orthes," "Vimiera," "Pyrenees," "Peninsula," "Corunna," "Nivelle," and "Niagara" (this last for the siege of Fort Erie).[2]

The Sixth Regiment at Fort Garry: Background

The year 1846 was the year in which the long-smouldering Oregon boundary dispute was settled. Although this settlement was peaceful and even fairly amicable, the threat of war between Britain and the United States had alarmed those who were responsible for the defence of British North America. In the east the defences of such strongholds as Fort Henry in Kingston were hastily strengthened, but in the west, the situation was considerably different. There was no protection of British interests in the far western settlement of Red River except that provided by the Hudson's Bay Company. Sir George Simpson, writing to Sir J. H. Pelly, Governor of the Company in London, was pessimistic about the situation in the west. Simpson noted that there seemed to be considerable warlike preparation on both sides of the American boundary.[3] If war were to break out, Simpson suggested, the Red River Settlement would certainly be attacked from the south, and the Métis

3 Winter dress at Fort Garry, sketched by George Finlay. Country mittens and moccasins complement the uniform (*Glenbow Foundation.*).

population, he felt, was of doubtful loyalty.

In the early part of 1846, the British government responded to the appeal of Sir J. H. Pelly for assistance. It is not certain exactly when the government took the decision to send troops to the colony, but on 23 February 1846, Governor-General Cathcart wrote to Simpson, putting questions to him about the proposed expedition.[4] Some of these questions and answers are worth noting. Referring to the proposed native corps which Simpson was thinking of raising among the Métis, Cathcart asked, "What proportion should consist of Cavalry and what of Infantry?" Simpson's answer was, "The Inhabitants of Red River . . . would be effective either as Cavalry or Infantry. They are excellent horsemen, and quite remarkable for their activity on foot; and from the constant use of the snow shoe in winter, could during that season, when the employment of horses would be impracticable, on account of the depth of snow, perform journeys on foot which Whites would be unequal to." This passage would seem to cast doubts on Simpson's professed uneasiness over the loyalty of the Métis; if he proposed to raise a Métis militia to augment the British troops, he must have had at least some confidence in their loyalty to the Crown.

Cathcart was careful to get a commitment from Simpson as to the Company's willingness to prepare the Red River forts for the arrival of any troops. He asked Simpson "Whether the Forts would be made or strengthened by the Company without assistance from Government, otherwise than that afforded by the troops?" To which Simpson replied: "The 'Lower Fort', a square of 800 feet, with stone walls 14 feet high, and 4 corner bastions, is not yet entirely finished, but could be completed by the Company without further aid than that afforded by the troops."[5] This reassurance was undoubtedly comforting to Cathcart and the British government, though in fact it stretched the truth a bit, the walls, for instance, were never that high.

A letter from Cathcart to W. E. Gladstone, then Secretary of War, sheds some light on the government's motives in complying with the Company's request for troops.[6] The grounds for the movement of troops which was to be given out was that they were going with the intention of "securing the allegiance of British subjects along the United States Frontier and of maintaining British Interests." But the real purpose of the expedition was "in respect to the important bearing of such a measure prospectively in influencing the success of a War with the United States." The idea of a militia was also in the forefront of Cathcart's thoughts, for he apparently expected great things from it:

By thus creating a nucleus for a formation of a Native Corps of considerable amount composed of a warlike and hardy race in a situation which would necessarily occasion the greatest possible annoyance and embarassment to the enemy from its having been unforseen and unprovided for. The appearance of such a Force on that Frontier of the United States would likewise in all probability determine the greater part if not the whole of the Indian tribes residing in

heir territory to revolt, it being well known that they cherish a deadly hatred towards the Americans.

This latter idea of inciting the Indians o revolt was nothing new in British-United States relations in North America, nd the Americans would undoubtedly ave been dangerously enraged had they een aware that the Governor-General of Canada was even contemplating such a course of action.

Cathcart was so keen on the idea of a native militia, which idea seems to have been mostly his, that he went so far as to say that if they were trained by British officers and non-commissioned officers, they might well be "more to be depended upon than British soldiers, who would be strangers to the Country and might fall into habits of Drunkenness and Irregularity." That Simpson was not so sanguine about the prospects of a competent home guard was acknowledged by Cathcart when he continued, "This would not however accord with Sir George Simpson's views, who attached great importance to the presence of a British garrison."[7]

The Duke of Wellington, writing from the Horse Guards in April of 1846, was alarmed at the ramifications of the whole proposal. He warned Gladstone that if the British troops were to occupy Fort Garry, he American army was almost sure to ttack it in an attempt "to acquire a little nilitary reputation for the United States \rmy" at the expense of the British. He uggested therefore that if the Red River ettlement must be garrisoned, the troops hould be provided with a strong fortifi-ation, a "redoubt . . . well-built . . . with good ditch, revetted scarp . . . a bomb proof defensible Barracks, and casemates."[8]

Gladstone sounded out the Treasury on the prospect of building a fortress on the Red River and got a firm "no." Wellington then attempted to have the whole project cancelled, giving as his reason: "It appears to me that if we are to lose the Country, it would be preferable to lose it undefended; and without disgrace to Her Majesty's Troops."[9]

Despite the duke's gloomy prognostications, however, the project was pushed forward, and on 1 May, it was announced that a detachment of the Sixth Foot would be sent to the Red River colony. The detachment was to consist of one field officer, 3 captains, 3 lieutenants, 3 ensigns, one assistant surgeon, 15 non-commissioned officers, 6 drummers, and 270 rank and file, "with the usual proportion of Women, &c."[10] A commissariat officer and two other medical officers were also to be sent.

The officer selected to command the troops was Major John Ffolliott Crofton. He had been born in Dublin on 9 October 1800, the son of the chaplain of Kilmainham Hospital, which was the Irish equivalent of the Chelsea Pensioners' Hospital in London. He had entered the army in 1824 and had joined the Sixth Regiment in 1825.[11]

A good deal of information has survived on the journey of the troops to the lower fort, for Crofton had been ordered to make a full report on the trip to his superiors. His journal, which, as he modestly said, "disclaims all literary pretensions,"[12] is actually a short but interesting account of the difficulties of moving a body of troops with their accoutrements over the inhospitable territory between York Factory and Red River.

The troops boarded the troopships *Blenheim* and *Crocodile* at Cork on 25 June 1846, and left for Hudson Bay the next day. The voyage passed without serious incident: the entry for 27 to 30 June gives the flavour of it.

The weather has been wet and stormy since leaving Cork, but is today moderately fine. I mustered the troops and caused the Articles of War to be read. There is a daily morning parade with arms when the weather permits, and the duties of watch &c. are all regularly performed as laid down in the Orders for the Army. In the evening I encourage the men to amuse themselves with such exercises as the ship admits of. On Sunday I read the Service to the troops, and with the Agent of Transports go round the berths and every part of the vessel occupied by the men.[13]

4 Finlay's sketches included the rear view of the winter uniform (*Glenbow Foundation.*).

Crofton reached York Factory on 8 August, but because of the unfavourable winds and heavy rains then prevailing, the unloading of troops and stores was not completed until 23 August. Crofton found to his dismay that there were not nearly as many boats available for transport as he had expected. He had been provided with 300 tons of stores, and had room for only 44 tons. He thus took with him from York Factory to Red River only two 3-pounders and one 6-pounder from his artillery stores, with other essentials, leaving behind the rest of his artillery and such impedimenta as "420 iron bedsteads."[14]

The troops, women, children, and equipment left in five parties of six boats each, manned by Hudson's Bay Company men, beginning on 17 August; all were safely at the two Forts Garry by 6 October. Crofton did not keep a journal of the trip from York Factory to Red River. He presented his observations on that part of the journey in the form of recommendations to parties which might have to follow in his footsteps. He called these "hints for the river route," and they contained much useful and practical advice as well as gave an idea of the difficulties he must have faced.

3. Officers and non-commissioned officers are to ascertain that the men do not go to sleep in wet clothes if there be any means of changing them, either wholly or even in part.

4. The spirit kegs are every night to be placed in the officers tent, and in the stern of the boats by day.

6. The men are to be warned against sitting on the gunwale of the boats, and are in no way to interfere with the native crews in navigating them, but merely assist in working them as ordered.

9. All fires are to be perfectly quenched on embarking, to prevent the woods taking fire along the river route.[15]

Crofton reached the lower fort in the evening of 10 September 1846, several days ahead of the main body of the troops. He recorded his initial impressions of the lower fort in a letter:

Reached the Lower Fort Garry at 1/2 past 11 oClock at night – the rain fell heavily all day, and we landed in a cold and miserable State. Rheumatism tortured me throughout the journey and I gladly found myself under a roof. – Captain Beatty of the Royal Engineers, and Mr. Bird of the HB Company received us, but we had to sleep on the floor, as the Lower Fort had no accommodations, all having been removed, and the Fort given over to Captain Beatty for the troops.[16]

The next day, Crofton went on a tour of inspection of the lower fort and found that all was in readiness for the troops. The "2 good stone Stores," now the fur loft building and the penitentiary building, had been fitted out with "Beds, Shelves, and Racks."[17] (One wonders why he did not sleep in one of these beds rather than on the floor.) "Cooking places," he reported, "were nearly ready – privies had been dug, and were nearly finished . . . . I found that a large quantity of grain . . . had been stored within the Walls . . . and that a good Oven had been constructed for the use of the Troops . . . . There are no wells in the fort," Crofton observed, "but I would supply this defect by filling the large Ice House with Ice from the River . . . next

Season Wells can be sunk inside the Walls."[18] (The ice house was in the southeast bastion.)

On the following day, 12 September, Crofton went on to the upper fort, which was to be his headquarters. Since Crofton spent most of his time at the upper fort, visiting the lower fort only infrequently, references to specific details at the lower fort in Crofton's correspondence are rare. However, it is a safe assumption that orders issued to the soldiers of the Sixth Regiment stationed at the upper fort as to dress, duties and the like, were duplicated at the lower fort, so an examination of the relevant papers proves to be more useful than at first may be supposed.

Reporting to England on 15 September 1846, only three days after his arrival at the upper fort, Crofton described the preparations he had made for the long winter ahead. "I have this day," he wrote, "made arrangement for supplying the Men with the Moccazins and Caps and Gloves required in the Winter and I have endeavoured to provide Beer and other small supplies to be retailed by a Suttler . . . but the supply of Malt is scant, and Barrels are few."[19]

Although Crofton had been in the colony only a few days, he felt compelled in his first report to launch a few broadsides at the country. He thought that the very existence of the place was illogical. From the rigid nature of the Climate, and there being no Commercial advantages peculiar to the Settlement, it is a matter of Wonder that settlers can be found to live here, where existence is often very precarious — It is however the only land in all the Territory capable of being cultivated, and is for this reason prized, though really of little value."[20] In a letter to his wife of the same date, Crofton expressed even stronger opinions. "The place is squalid; the houses of the best settlers have heaps of dung and dirt near their doors. They seem idle, and not to care for manuring their lands."[21] On another occasion he expressed himself even more vehemently on the subject of the colonists' shortcomings. "I am much disgusted with the vulgar and ill-bred folk here. I feel great dislike in having to invite them to our table, but as Com Off I am necessitated to be hospitable against my tastes. I bow them out, with most polite pleasure. Our own society is pretty good."[22] One wonders if the colonists sensed, behind the "most polite pleasure," the contempt that Crofton had for them. Unfortunately no records survive to tell us the answer, but it may be supposed that they were not totally unaware of his dislike.

In the letter just mentioned above, Crofton revealed to his wife that he had already applied to Fitzroy Somerset for leave to return to England. "Since there is peace with the U.S.," he reasoned, "I can gain nothing by wasting time here. The credit of the expedition, if any, has been gained. The place is occupied, all arrangements made, and any Officer can govern now . . . . It is only routine work. The handle of the Military Machine, when in good order, is easily turned."[23]

Details of the soldiers' life at Lower Fort Garry in 1846-48 are not plentiful, but enough information exists to allow at least a partial picture to be drawn. The lower fort was under the command of Captain N. A. Sullivan, who had under him Captain Beatty (already referred to), Lieutenant Moody (of the Sappers), Lieutenant W. A. Stratton, Lieutenant H. P. Gore, Lieutenant W. F. Robertson, Assistant Surgeon Mostyn, along with the Sappers and 150 men of the Sixth Regiment.[24]

There exists a description of the daily routine at the upper fort which may be said with some confidence to reflect the routine at the lower fort as well. *Our days are spent here much as they are in all remote stations of the Army. We parade every morning at 10 o'clock, go through, as the weather suits, few or many of the useful movements, after which the Guard mounts. The Officers inspect the Barrack rooms, and then variously employ or amuse themselves. At 4 o'clock we have Roll-Call, attended by the Orderly Officer. The men are encouraged by me in manly amusements, and I think they will get over the winter without much ennui.*[25]

It seems not unreasonable to assume that Captain Sullivan followed much the same routine at the lower fort.

Crofton and all his officers chafed at the inactivity which the long winter forced upon them in the "remote and half-Civilized Country," as Crofton put it, "where there is no Society for the Officers, and not even the Amusements of shooting and hunting, which they were led to expect . . . [there is] no sport whatever."[26] Even the officers' mess had ceased to be a place of jollity. "The Mess hour [at the upper fort] is 6 o'clock, and it breaks up at 8 o'clock, all very sober indeed! Wine is so scarce a luxury here that 12 (of the Mess) can obtain only two bottles daily among them. Enough in my opinion."[27]

5 A bugler boy struggles with an oversize coat on a cold winter morning. George Finlay, 1847 (*Glenbow Foundation.*).

There is extant in the Hudson's Bay Company papers a letter from Lieutenant Moody to Sir George Simpson in which he asks for a few amenities and complains of the dullness of life at the lower fort. "I am afraid you will consider me a bore giving you these commissions but you know what a deadly lively [sic] kind of place this is and we must do something to keep ourselves alive."[28] In the same letter Moody reveals that "the Lower Fort is the sporting one and the head quarters men come out to us to see the fun."[29] There must therefore have been some entertainment for the officers at the lower fort, despite Crofton's and Moody's gloomy reports.

The winter of 1846-47 was very hard on the troops, both mentally and physically. Crofton speaks several times of the terrible *ennui* which the climate imposed upon the officers and men, and in a letter of 23 April 1847, says "We all, more or less, were skin-bitten [with frost], but no one has lost ear, nose, finger, or toe, which is more than we could have hoped for with reason."[30]

To combat these harsh conditions, Crofton made sure his men were as well dressed as possible. On 20 January 1847, when the temperature was -47° F., "the officers and men were dressed in their double-lined Great Coats, Moccasins, Fur Caps, with ear flaps, Fur mittens, and with accoutrements outside the Great-coats. All Sentries, by day or night, were provided with Buffalo Cloaks, kept at each post for their use."[31]

Nor was the mental state of the men neglected. Crofton "induced many of the young men to form themselves into reading and writing classes. For those who

could not read, I suggested the employment of a good Reader, round whom they could sit, and thus made the Books in some degree available for all. The Guard was daily supplied with 2 or 3 books, placed in charge of the Sergeant, who was usually disposed to read aloud."[32]

Thus the winter passed, and in the spring, when the Red River broke up, Crofton observed that he felt like "a poor prisoner [looking] on the unlocking of the prison gate, hoping it may be unlocked for his release."[33] With the advent of more moderate weather, the troops returned to a daily routine of parades and drills.

Crofton waited with intense impatience for the arrival of Sir George Simpson with the mail, which he hoped would bring news of his transfer back to Britain. While he waited, he paid a visit to the lower fort in May, and received the Indian chief Pequis (or Pequisse), giving him presents worth £7.10s. Od. "This expense I incurred," wrote Crofton, "for the good name of H. M.'s Troops."[34]

Simpson finally arrived in June, as did Major Griffiths, who was to take over command of the troops, and Crofton gratefully left "this horrible place" on the thirtieth of the month, arriving in Montreal on 6 August.

The troops, however, could not be moved so quickly, though since friendly relations had been restored with the United States, it was the government's desire to remove them; it was not until the summer of 1848 that they left the colony for good. The records, unfortunately, shed no light on the activities of the Sixth Regiment during the winter of 1847-48. Presumably they did not differ much from those of the previous winter.

There are a few indications in the records which may be useful in discovering how the troops were outfitted for service in Red River. Mention has already been made of the special winter clothing. A letter from Crofton to Fitzroy Somerset with suggestions as to how any future expedition to the Red River colony might be equipped is also of some value. Crofton mentions the "canvas frocks and trowsers" which were issued to the men as a sea-kit, and says that since the voyage to York does not take more than seven weeks, the issue of a second kit is unnecessary. Would this mean that the troops at Lower Fort Garry had such gear? Crofton also advises that "havresacks and Canteens are not needed" and that "The Forage Caps should have leather peaks in this country." Oxhide shoes were not required for the trip to the forts, but each soldier should be supplied with three pairs of "tracking shoes" made of moose skin: these were apparently in use by the soldiers, between York Factory and Fort Garry at least, having been supplied, possibly by the Hudson's Bay Company, at 7d. a pair.[35]

The Sixth Regiment of Foot played no spectacular part in the history of western Canada. The danger for which it was hastily transported across 2,000 miles of ocean and muskeg proved to be illusory; the attack against which it stood guard never came. Yet it provided an object lesson for those who cared to learn – that Great Britain in 1846 was still ready and able to defend her colonies, even the weak and isolated one far away on the banks of the Red River.

Endnotes

1 Great Britain. Army, *Historical Records of the British Army* (London: Adjutant-General's Office, 1837), p. 2.
2 Later they were at "South Africa, 1846-7, 1851-2-3," "Atbara," "Khartoum," and "South Africa, 1899-1902."
3 The letter is quoted in W.E. Ingersoll, "Redcoats at Fort Garry," *The Beaver*, Outfit 276 (December 1945), p. 14.
4 "Answers to quaeres submitted to Sir George Simpson by . . . Cathcart, . . . 23 February 1846. PAC, MG12, WO1, Vol. 557, p. 17 ff.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., p. 9, Cathcart to Gladstone, 25 February 1846.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., p. 139, Wellington to Gladstone, 8 April 1846.
9 Ibid., 15 April 1846.
10 Ibid., p. 187, Fitzroy Somerset to James Stephen, 1 May 1846. Crofton's journal mentions the presence of 15 women and 17 children on the journey to Red River. Great Britain. War Office, *Notes on the Route from Lake Superior to Red River and on the Settlement Itself* (London: War Office, 1870), Appendix, p. 6.
11 This biographical material is taken from the introduction to the copy of extracts from Crofton's letters and diary in the Winnipeg Public Library (hereafter cited as Crofton Letter Book).
12 Great Britain. War Office, op. cit., Appendix, p. 3.
13 Ibid., p. 4.
14 Ibid., p. 6.
15 Ibid., p. 12.
16 PAC, MG12, WO1, Vol. 557, p. 199, Crofton to Fitzroy Somerset, 15 September 1846.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
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The Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles, at Lower Fort Garry

by William R. Morrison

Abstract

The Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles, was part of the expeditionary force sent to Red River in 1870 to suppress the Red River Rebellion. The force arrived after Riel and his followers had fled, and after less than a year at Lower Fort Garry, the battalion was disbanded, some returning to their homes in the East and others settling in the Red River area.

Historical Background

The Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles, was part of the Red River expeditionary force which travelled to Manitoba in the late summer of 1870 to suppress the disorder of the Red River Rebellion. Before examining the services of this battalion, it will be necessary to consider the reasons behind the decision to send it to the West.

The Red River Rebellion of 1869-70 is one of the least glorious chapters in Canadian history. Its cause, which should not concern us in detail here, is best summed up by G.F.G. Stanley as "a movement against the Dominion of Canada for national and economic security."[1] The results of the discontent aroused by the encroachment of civilization on the privileges and traditions of the Métis are more important than the causes, since they posed a threat to Canadian sovereignty in the West and were the direct motivation for the formation of the Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles.

In the autumn of 1869, the Red River colony had polarized into two factions. In Winnipeg, Louis Riel and his Métis followers were adopting an increasingly defiant stand *vis-à-vis* the federal government. At Lower Fort Garry, Colonel J.S. Dennis had set up headquarters for a counter-revolutionary movement, the "Canadian party." This group had small support in the colony, but its members provided an irritant to Riel. By the end of that year, however, Riel and the Métis had made themselves complete masters of the colony.

The Canadian government, to which all these events had come as an unpleasant surprise, reacted mildly at first, and sought to end the dispute by medi tion rather than by force, and to this e sent commissioners to the Red River report on the grievances of the Mét Unfortunately, its belated good inte tions were largely vitiated by the slowne with which it acted, and by the infamo shooting of Thomas Scott. Matters we made worse by the uproar which t supporters of the "Canadian party" h begun to foment in Ontario. Pressu grew on the federal government to put end to what many people considered be arrant treason.

Sir John A. Macdonald, who h earlier ignored warnings that trouble w ahead in the West, was now hastening repair the damage that had been don While p blicly he was "pursuing a polic of conciliation and concession," he was the same time "quietly making prepar tions for the sending of a [military expedition" to the disaffected settl ment.[2] The preparations for this exped tion were made in the late winter of 186 and the early spring of 1870. To ensu that the troops would be able to get Red River, Macdonald assigned S. Dawson the task of building a roa between the head of Lake Superior an the waters flowing into Lake Winnipe Contracts were let for the construction boats to take troops over the water pa of this route. Two steamers were cha tered to carry troops through the Gre Lakes to Thunder Bay, and Indian agent were sent into the Rainy River country t prepare the Indians for the expedition t come.

The question of the composition o the troops was a thorny one. Macdonal was anxious to have as much Canadia

articipation in it as possible, and for this articipation to be on as broad a base as ould be managed, both from English and rench Canada. In this he showed that he as not unaware of the political implica-ons of sending Canadian troops to ippress the Métis; he wished to involve rench Canada in this task as much as ossible, as will become apparent resently. However, Macdonald also vished to have British troops in the expedition. He gave his reasons in a confidential minute of the cabinet:

First a belief exists not only in Rupert's Land but in the United States, extending even to their leading statesmen, that England does not care for the retention of her North American Colonies as a portion of the Empire, and that she will not make any effort to retain them.

Secondly, because the prestige of an Expedition composed partly of Regular troops will be much greater than if it consisted of untried volunteers only; and

Thirdly, because a feeling of hostility to Canada having unfortunately arisen which does not exist with regard to England, the insurgents would more readily lay down their arms to a British force than one entirely Canadian – and even in the case of actual resistance, the conflict would not be attended with the same animosity, and after the rising was put down would not leave behind it such feelings of bitterness and humiliation.

It is hoped, then, that H. M. Government will readily assent to send a small body of Regular troops, with an officer of reputation in command. Canada will supplement that Force to any extent that may be necessary to quell the insurrection and restore peace and order.[3]

The British government met this request with marked lack of enthusiasm. In the first place, it was in the process of withdrawing all its troops from Canada; in the second, it feared the wrath of the Americans. However, after much prodding, it eventually decided to contribute a force, and 373 officers and men of the Sixtieth Rifles, along with detachments of artillery, engineers, service corps and hospital corps formed the British part of the expedition.

The Canadian contingent was made up of militia, one battalion from Ontario, called the First Battalion, Ontario Rifles, and one from Quebec, called the Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles. The first comprised 382, all ranks, and the second, 389. The ground rules for the Canadian part of the expedition were laid down by Colonel P. Robertson-Ross, the Adjutant-General of Militia, in a letter of 15 April 1870 to Sir G.-E. Cartier, the Minister of Militia and Defence, a copy of which is found in Appendix A. Robertson-Ross proposed to raise two battalions of seven companies each, one from Ontario and one from Quebec, of 382 men each, all ranks included. Enlistment was to be entirely voluntary, and the volunteers were to be drawn as far as possible from the active militia. The volunteers were to engage to serve for at least one year but not more than two. These were to be between 18 and 45 years of age, of "good character, sober habits, and physically fit for the service." Preference was to be given to men willing to settle in the West.

The two battalions were to be "clothed as Riflemen,"[4] and were to be armed and equipped in the following manner:

1 Short Snider Enfield Rifle and Sword Bayonet and Accoutrements, complete
60 rounds service ammunition
1 knapsack
1 havresack
1 tin plate and mug
1 blanket
1 waterproof sheet
1 cloth (Rifle) tunic
1 greatcoat
1 pair cloth trousers

1 forage cap
1 pair beef boots
1 pair ankle boots
1 linen blouse and pair of trousers
1 mosquito net

There was also to be a "free kit," consisting of:

2 flannel shirts
2 pairs socks
1 pair braces
2 linen towels
1 knife, fork & spoon with hold-all
1 cloth brush
2 blacking brushes
1 comb
1 box blacking
1 tin waterproof blacking
2 darning needles
1 piece darning yarn
2 ordinary needles
1 hank of thread
1 piece of soap

In addition to which for the winter there was to be provided:

1 tunic (cloth)
1 pair cloth trousers
1 winter cap (fur)
1 pair mitts
2 knitted undershirts
2 pairs knitted drawers
1 muffler[5]

Further information on the kit given to the troops is found in a memo entitled "List of stores supplied to the Red River expedition,"[6] which mentions:

Frocks, blue serge
Frocks, green, S/Sgts. and Sgts.
Frocks, green, Rank and File

Much the same equipment appears in Robertson-Ross' request of 16 April 1870 for permission to purchase supplies.[7] The additional items are presumably for the teamsters, voyageurs, and other auxiliaries to the expedition. They are:

14 bugles with green cords
73 linen tents
76 camp kettles
150 chopping axes
150 spades
150 shovels
150 picks

It was proposed that "the Rifles, accoutrements, ammunition, knapsacks, camp-kettles and bugles be drawn from the Imperial Stores on payment in the usual way, that the clothing, ankle-boots, tents, blankets, and necessaries be drawn from Militia Stores on payment and that the most economical contracts be made for the delivery of the other articles without delay, so as to enable the men to take a complete outfit with them and to provide for sending the second set of uniform and winter necessaries to the North West at a later period in the season."[8]

Also on the subject of supplies for the expedition, it is interesting to note that the government saw fit to supply it with 750 linen bandages and 750 "cholera belts."[9]

John A. Macdonald's sensible scheme of getting as many French Canadians into the expedition as possible, to draw the teeth of protest from Quebec was, unfortunately, not as successful as he had hoped. While the Ontario Rifles filled its ranks quickly, and even had a waiting list of those wanting to join, recruiting for the Quebec Rifles proceeded very slowly. The Quebec press was ill-disposed toward the expedition. One of Wolseley's staff described the situation:

The Quebec battalion was not so fortunate in its enrolment. The French Canadians, naturally averse to military service, were deterred from enlisting by the exhortations of their clergy, who, in many of the parishes in Lower Canada, publicly dissuaded their flocks from joining a regiment "about to be sent to fight against their bretheren in the North-West."[10]

English-speaking Canadians from Quebec were eligible for the battalion, but it was popularly supposed that they were in many cases unwilling to enlist because of the fact that two-thirds of the officers of the battalion were French-speaking.[11] Whether or not this supposition is true would be difficult to establish, but the upshot of it all was that the vacancies in the Quebec Rifles had to be filled from Ontario. Of the 362 noncommissioned ranks of the Quebec battalion, only 77 were French Canadian.[12] Thus the expedition lost at the beginning whatever bipartisan character it was supposed to have, especially since Ontario began to see it more and more as a holy war against the French-speaking murderers of Thomas Scott.

The final composition of the two battalions was as shown in Table 1. It is interesting to note that by far the largest single national group was made up of those born in England, although the Canadian-born did outnumber the British-born.

Table 1. The Composition of the First Two Battalions.

Nationality	First Battalion	Second Battalion (as of 23 June 1870)
English	79	74
Irish	29	52
Scottish	32	21
Born in Canada,		
English	55	61
Irish	65	20
Scottish	45	15
Other English-speaking	40	21
French-Canadian	3	77
Foreigners		
Naturalized	3	3
Born in Canada of foreign parents	4	18
	355	362
Religion		
Protestant	330	236
Roman Catholic	25	126
Discharged after enrollment as physically unfit	3	23[13]

The Journey West

Since the journey of the expedition to the Red River is probably more interesting than what the troops did when they got there (and this is especially true of the Quebec Rifles), some study should be made of the details of this trip.

The volunteers, with the Second Battalion in the process of being fleshed out with additional English-speaking volunteers, assembled in Toronto in the first week of May, 1870, and was barracked at the Crystal Palace. There it joined the regulars of the Sixtieth Rifles, and there it was joined by Colonel Wolseley and his staff on 5 May.

Colonel Wolseley, who was at that time Deputy Quartermaster-General in British North America, was a fortunate choice for commander of the expedition. He had given distinguished service for over 20 years to the British army, and was a man of courage and considerable intelligence. He was also, by the military standards of the day, quite progressive in his thinking; this was an advantage to him in the novel circumstances he was to find on the trip to Red River.

The expeditionary force left Toronto at the end of May, travelling to Collingwood by train, and by steamer to Thunder Bay. The Quebec Rifles seem to have acquitted themselves well on this part of the trip; Colonel R.F. Fielden of the Sixtieth Rifles reported "the men of the Quebec Battalion behaved well. I did not notice any irregularity or drunkenness whatever, and the Officers were very attentive to their duties, from their leaving the Crystal Palace to the time of the companies being embarked on board the 'Algoma.' "[14]

The only incident during the trip through the lakes was the American government's unwillingness to pass the expedition through the Sault Ste. Marie canal, an episode which was more an annoyance than a danger. It was the next part of the journey which posed the difficulties.

From Thunder Bay west, the expedition was compelled to help build its own road, along with the navvies who were brought along specifically for the task. A good deal had been done under the direction of S. J. Dawson before the arrival of the troops, but much remained to do. From 9 June to 16 July, the noncommissioned officers and men of the Quebec Rifles put in 940.5 days' work on the road.[15] The sort of work they were required to do on this section is indicated in the reports which were sent back east, one of which runs as follows:

Col. Wolseley started from camp on Monday morning, 6th [June], *at 4.30 A.M., to ride along the road as far as* [he] *could. It poured with rain . . . . At the present moment the road may be said to end at the Oskondigee Creek, 75 feet wide. It is still unbridged, but a gang of men reached there on Monday evening to construct a bridge, which will not take long . . . . For the last eight or nine miles*

before reaching that creek the road is only a track, and it is impassable for loaded wagons in wet weather.... Strong gangs of men are now working at it.[16]

The same writer also commented that "the hard work which the troops have had to do has not hurt their health; this may be attributed to the absence of liquor and to the good food they have received."[17]

Wolseley wrote of the militia's work during this period:

The absence of any spiritous liquor as part of the daily issue, is marked by the excellent health and spirits of the men, and I may add by a remarkable absence of crime. The work performed by the men up to their arrival here [at Ward's Landing, three miles from Lake Shebandowan] *has been very considerable, so much so, that many companies already begin to present a ranged appearance. This work has been especially hard upon the Militia, from the fact of their having to work in thick winter trousers when the thermometer has sometimes stood over 90° in the shade. Only one pair of trousers was supplied to each man by the Department of Militia and Defence. I have made repeated application for a pair of light serge trousers per man to be given in addition to the heavy ones, and I am glad to say that they have at last arrived, and are now being distributed. Lately each militiaman was furnished with a pair of linen trousers, but they are of a most inferior description, and last only a short time. They are quite unsuited for a climate such as this one, where it rains nearly every other day. Speaking generally, the personal equipment supplied to the Militia by the Canadian Government is much inferior to that furnished to the Regular Troops from our own Military Stores.... The Militia have vied with the Regulars in their exertions to push everything forward, and the Regulars by their good conduct and the manner in which they have worked, have set them an example that they have been justly proud to follow.*[18]

To focus more exactly on the Quebec Rifles as they journeyed west is not as easy as might be hoped, because this unit was the last to travel over the route, and thus did not receive as much official attention as did the others. Some rather sketchy indications of its progress appear in the official reports, from which we can get some idea of what went on during the trip. There is a record of the progress of a detachment of 12 officers and 95 men of the battalion. It left Toronto on 4 June at 7 A.M., and left Collingwood at 3:30 P.M. of the same day, arriving at Sault Ste. Marie on 6 June at 9 P.M. It left the Sault at 11 the next morning. It arrived at Prince Arthur's Landing on 8 June at 10 P.M.[19] The rest of the battalion maintained a similar schedule.

On Tuesday, 21 June, Wolseley inspected the Quebec Rifles (at 7 A.M.). It was reported that "the men turned out clean and well, but presented a contrast to the 1st Ontario Rifles in their height and size, a great many of them being small, slight men, apparently quite unable to withstand the hardships which are before them."[20] This rather unkind observation was to prove to be unfounded.

The further details of this trip, though rather interesting, are much too lengthy and complicated to recount here. They may readily be found in the Appendix to *Notes on the Route from Lake Superior to Red River and on the Settlement Itself.*

ne expedition reached Fort Garry on 24 ugust, and the whole affair ended with a imper, when it was found that Riel d his followers had fled. The British gulars were almost immediately sent ck to eastern Canada, as had been eviously agreed, and the troops moved to quarters, the First Ontario Rifles at ort Garry and the Second Quebec Rifles t Lower Fort Garry. It should be noted here that during this period one company of the First Battalion served at Kingston, and one company of the Second Battalion served at St. Helen's Island, Montreal.

The stone fort had been suggested by S. J. Dawson as a good place for quartering the troops before the expedition started out, and even before the arrival of the troops, plans were under way to build new structures at the lower fort for the Quebec Rifles. The "Proposed Appropriation of Buildings in Lower Fort as Barracks for the Quebec Rifles" is a most important document in this respect, both for its glimpse into the stay of the battalion at the fort, and for the information it gives on the contemporary physical layout of the fort. It is therefore reprinted in full in Appendix B.

Apparently not all the officers actually lived in the fort; the evidence for this assertion rests on a letter from J.W. Irvine, who was representing the control department on the expedition, to Colonel Wolseley:

The quarters placed at our disposal, by the Hudson's Bay Company for the use of officers at the two Forts, afford very limited accommodation and as it is necessary that as many officers as possible live in these buildings, few if any will have the space that would be allotted to them in ordinary Barracks. Those who cannot be accommodated will find the greatest difficulty in obtaining lodgings and will have to pay exceedingly high rents... submit the case for your consideration with a view to authority being obtained for the issue of all allowances in kind to them.[21]

The work of altering the two forts to suit the needs of the troops went on through the autumn of 1870, and was completed before the worst of winter set in. S. J. Dawson wrote to Colonel Wolseley on 6 September 1870, informing him that:

I have already ordered the purchase of all the lumber to be procured in the settlement and have entered into communication with the manager of a small saw mill at Pembina, in the hope of obtaining an additional quantity.... nails, glass etc. have been ordered from St. Clouds' and the carpenters, now on the line of route between Fort Francis and Lake Superior have already been sent for. The difficulty of finding skilled labour and the scarcity of material in this remote section must occasion delay but I trust nevertheless to have the work well on before the severe weather sets in.[22]

The troops at both forts were supplied mostly by contract, let out locally. An example of an invitation to submit tenders has been preserved:

Notice *Sealed Tenders (in duplicate) will be received by the Assistant Controller, Fort Garry, until noon on Thursday the 1st September next... for the supply of such quantities of the undermentioned articles as may be required by the troops stationed at Fort Garry and the Stone Fort up to the 30 June 1871 - viz:—*

Fresh Bread at per lb
Flour per 100 lbs
Fresh Beef per lb
Potatoes per Bushel
Coffee per lb
Tea per lb
Sugar per lb
Salt per lb
Pepper per lb
Fuel Wood per Cord
Coal Oil per Gallon
Pine lumber per 1000 feet
Timber for building purposes, per log.[23]

The commissariat at the lower fort was superintended by "Captain Peebles and his assistant." Controller Irvine suggested to Wolseley "the appointment of a Non.Commd. Officer as Store keeper but all supplies received direct from Contractors, should be received by the Quarter Master of the Regiment."[24]

Documentary evidence on the duties and routine of the Quebec Rifles at Lower Fort Garry is, unfortunately, far from abundant. No one attached to this battalion seems to have written his memoirs, or deposited any papers in an archives or a library. The military records afford only glimpses of the activities at the fort and it seems we must be content with these. The problem was the same in 1870 as with the military expedition of 1846; all the activity which was considered important enough to record took place at the upper fort, and what went on at the lower fort was largely ignored at the time and afterward.

One such glimpse comes from correspondence between Father M. J. Royer, who was Roman Catholic chaplain to the

Quebec Rifles, and Sir George Cartier. On 23 September 1870, Royer wrote to Cartier complaining that there was no chapel at the stone fort and that he was therefore unable to minister to his flock. He had, he said, decided to move to St. Boniface, where he would be able to minister to Catholics of both battalions.[25] He seems to have carried out this plan, for on 28 November, he wrote to Ottawa protesting that the spiritual needs of his charges at the lower fort were being neglected.

J'ai en aussi de fraiches nouvelles de la chapelle au Fort d'en bas. M. [illeg.], *chargé des travaux qui doivent se faire ici, m'a dit qu'il ne pourrait me faire préférer d'appartement pour cet objet, parce qu'il n'avait pas assez de bois. Je ne sais franchement comment je ferai pour faire du bien aux soldats; sans chapelle, je regarde la chose comme impossible . . . . ah! mon cher Monsieur, nos pauvres jeunes gens auraient pourtant bien besoin d'exercises religieux, pour les maintenir dans leur foi, au milieu de Protestants.*[26]

It will be remembered that the French Canadians in the battalion were in a distinct minority. The chapel, despite Royer's pleas, was never built.

The exact composition of the Quebec Rifles may be ascertained from the monthly pay sheets which are preserved in the papers of the Department of Militia and Defence. A copy of the list for October 1870 appears in Appendix C.

The names of the officers and especially of the men who served in the battalion are more difficult to discover, for no nominal roll seems to have survived. The names of some of the officers are known: Lieutenant-Colonel L.-A. Casault, the commanding officer; Major A.G. Irvine (not the same man as Controller Irvine); Captain Thomas Howard, the paymaster; Captain C.L. de Bellefeuille, of No. 1 Company, St. Helen's Island; Captain LaBranche of No. 5 Company; Herbert Neilsen (or Neilson), the medical officer; Captain Peebles, the quartermaster; Lieutenant Henri Bouthillier, who was appointed Lieutenant-Governor Archibald's orderly officer.[27] The rest are, unfortunately, anonymous, except when their names appear in the official correspondence.

One file of correspondence which does shed further light on the matter is that which contains the letters which were written to the government from members of the battalion asking for commissions. One Arthur Charland, of No. 1 Company, petitioned the government to give him a commission in the event that, as was generally expected, the battalion should be increased to 1,000 men.[28] (The petition was sent from Thunder Bay and was approved by Captain deBellefeuille. This raises a question: How did No. 1 Company come to be in Thunder Bay when it was meant to serve, and did serve, on St. Helen's Island, Montreal? Can we assume that this company went all the way to lakehead or Red River and then returned to Montreal? This seems rather unlikely, though the facts are missing. Perhaps all requests from the regiment were forwarded through the regimental headquarters, which would seem more likely.) Similar petitions were received from G.P. Dillon, Sergeant Thomas Garon and Sergeant Matthew Thomas de Beaujeu Hunter. One C/Sgt. Herman Martineau wrote directly to Cartier, reminding him of his promises that the military would be a fine career for young French Canadians:

Si je m'adresse directement à vous, c'est que j'ai foi et confiance aux promesses par vous faits aux jeunes canadiens qu'ont tout sacrifié pour joindre l'Expédition et embrasser la carrière militaire. Je suis un de ces jeunes canadiens, j'ai suivi l'Expédition depuis Toronto jusqu'au Fort Garry.[29]

It would seem that none of these petitions was granted, for there were no vacancies for officers, and the strength of the battalions was not increased.

What did the Quebec Rifles do during their stay at the lower fort? On these points the records are, unhappily, silent. Presumably they mounted guard, drilled, and carried out the numerous daily tasks of soldiers everywhere. But there seems to have been no extraordinary event in their service at the fort.

For amusement, the Quebec Rifles had a brass band, the instruments of which had apparently been purchased from the departing British regulars at the end of August, 1870.[30] The plan of the alterations made at the fort shows no canteen; presumably the men had to go into the settlement to find a tavern, though it is likely that beer would have been available at the Hudson's Bay Company store, which continued to operate throughout the military occupation of the fort.

Some few members of the Quebec Rifles joined a police force which was raised by Lieutenant-Governor Archibald at the end of 1870. This unit comprised one officer, one sergeant, twelve men from the two militia battalions, and ten civilians. These men were to serve as a

vil police force and would presumably ve been more unbiased in their proach to the colony's peculiar probms than a force made up entirely of ttlers — so, at any rate, Archibald elieved.[31]

By the spring of 1871, arrangements ere well under way for the removal of the oops from Red River. This measure was ot popular with the English settlers, and petitions poured in to the government at Ottawa denouncing it. One from Kildonan read:

The rebels of last winter have gained confidence from the fact that they remain unpunished . . . . The appointment of rebels to office and the arbitrary and unwarrantable actions of those in high office has produced a want of confidence in the disposition or power of the Government [of Manitoba] *to ensure to us safety and prosperity . . . . Indians in our neighbourhood are in an unquiet state, and say that if murder and robbery can go unpunished with us, it must also with them.*[32]

On 19 January 1871, the Privy Council authorized the reduction of the force in the West to two companies, one from each battalion, who were to volunteer to serve for six months from the first of May, plus an extra six months if required.[33] What actually happened to these companies is not recorded.

The arrangements for moving the rest of the troops were made in April, and the men left, apparently, in that month or early in May. It will be remembered that the volunteers were to be encouraged to stay in the West. Some 380, all ranks, from both battalions decided not to do so. On the other hand, 100 of the troops at Kingston and St. Helen's Island decided to exercise their option to go to Manitoba at government expense.[34] Thus the West gained about half, or slightly more of the force. The rest went home. Some members of the Ontario Rifles felt inspired to write reminiscences of the expedition, but no one in the Quebec battalion felt the same impulse, and the contribution of that latter group was very quickly forgotten.

The House HeadQuarters
The Minister of Militia
and Defence Ottawa April 15th 1870

Sir.

In view of the contemplated expedition to the North West Territory, I have the honor to request that the following steps may be taken without delay.

1. That two Battalions of Riflemen of 350 non-Commissioned Officers and men per Battalion (exclusive of Officers) be raised in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and engaged to serve as soldiers for one year or for such longer period as the Government may require, but not exceeding two years in all.

2. That these Battalions should consist of "7" Companies each, of 50 non Commissioned Officers and men, having one Captain, and one Lieutenant and one Ensign to each Company.

3. That the Staff of each Battalion should consist of 1 Lieut. Colonel, 1 Major, 1 Adjutant with rank of Lieutenant, 1 Pay Master, 1 Quarter-Master, 1 Surgeon, 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quarter Master Sergeant, 1 Hospital Sergeant, 1 Armourer Sergeant, 1 Pay Master Clerk, thus making the Strength of each Battalion "382" including Officers, Staff-Sergeants, non-Commissioned Officers and men, and that 1 Chaplain be attached to each Battalion, at the usual rate of pay.

4. It is recommended that the men to form these Battalions may be engaged by Voluntary enlistment to serve therein, from the existing Corps if possible of Active Militia in the following proportions, viz:—

	Companies	Officers	Men
Military dist Nº 11	2	3	50 per Cº
" " 2	2	3	50 "
" " 3	2	3	50 "
" " 4	1	3	50 "
" " 5	2	3	50 "
" " 6	2	3	50 "
" " 7	3	3	50 "

5. That the rates of pay and allowances to the Officers of these Battalions be as laid down in Paragraph "286" of the Regulations and Orders for the Active Militia with free Rations when on the March or encamped, and the pay of the non-Commissioned Officers and men as follows–

Sergeant Major	$20 per month
Quarter Master Sergt.	$20 " "
Hospital Sergt.	$18 " "
Pay Master's Clerk	$18 " "
Armourer Sergt.	$18 " "
Colour Sergt.	$18 " "
Sergeants	$15 " "
Corporals & Buglers	$13 " "
Privates	$12 " "

Non Commissioned Officers and men to receive in addition to their pay Free Rations and Lodgings.

6. That immediate instructions be given to the Deputy Adjutants General of the Districts named to call for such number of men as are authorized in Paragraph 4 care being taken that the men so selected shall be between the ages of 18 and 45 years, of good character, sober habits, and physically fit for the service and that each man so engaged be subject to a final medical examination at the District Head Quarters.

7. That each man, on final approval, be required to sign a Service Roll, and be regularly attested before a Magistrate at the District Head Quarters, where the total number of men authorized for such District be mustered, not later than the 1st May, there to be billeted and await concentration.

8. That such concentration should take place as soon as circumstances will admit after such muster, at such place or places as shall be indicated by the Lt. General Commanding.

9. That each Non-Commissioned Officer and man be outfitted on enlistment with a free kit, and be properly clothed, armed and equipped.

10. That the two Battalions be clothed as Riflemen, and Armed and equipped as follows:–

1. Short Snider Enfield Rifle, Sword bayonet, and accoutrements complete 60 rounds service ammunition.
1. Knapsack
1. Water bottle
1. Blanket
1. Cloth (Rifle) tunic
1. Great Coat
1. Pair Beef Boots
1. Linen Blouse and Pair of Trousers
1. Haversack
1. Tin plate & mug
1. Waterproof sheet
1. Pair Cloth Trousers
1. Forage Cap
1. Pair Ankle Boots
1 Mosquito net

The Free Kit to consist of

2. Flannel Shirts
1. pair of Braces
1. Knife, fork & Spoon with Hold-all
1 Cloth Brush
1. Comb
1. Tin Waterproof Blacking
1. Piece Darning yarn
1. Hank of thread
2 pairs of socks
2 linen towels
2. Blacking Brushes
1 Box Blacking
2. Darning Needles
2 Ordinary needles
1 piece of soap

in addition to which for winter use, there will be provided

1. Tunic (Cloth)
1 Winter Cap (Fur)
2. Knitted undershirts
1. Pair Cloth Trousers
1 Pair Mitts
2 pair knitted drawers
1 muffler

11. That with the exception of uniform clothing and Boots, should subsequent issue of necessaries be required, such issues to be our repayment.

12. That each Deputy Adjutant

eneral of the Districts named be in-ructed to recommend the names of one aptain and one Lieutenant and one nsign for each Company authorized to raised in their respective Districts, and hom they may consider best qualified act as Captain and Lieutenant and nsign to these Companies.

13. That the selection of the Field)fficers, and Battalion Staff should be ndertaken by the Adjutant General subject to approval.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

signed,

P. Robertson-Ross

Colonel, Adjt. Genl. Militia

Proposed Appropriation of Buildings in Lower Fort as Barracks for the Quebec Rifles

1st Log House to be converted into a Hospital, two wards to be formed on ground floor with a passage (6' wide) between them. Attics to be converted into Surgery, Hospital Sergeants and Orderlies Quarters and Stores.

A Staircase to be constructed to upper story at end of centre passage, a Covered way to be constructed leading to privy, Ablution Room and Kitchen as shewn in block plan. A porch to be constructed over door.

This building requires considerable repair.

2nd A two storied House 50' x 20' to be constructed on site shewn in plan. To hold 50 men, Upper Story to be reached by outside staircase.

3rd Cook-houses and Ablution Rooms to be erected as shewn in plan. Also two privies each 20' x 10' having 6 seats and Urinals at each end: the ablution House to be heated by Stove fitted with boiler.

4th A Guard House with 6 cells to be constructed near eastern gate. To be of two Stories and appropriated as shewn in block plan in margin

A Orderly Room 16' x 11'

B Pay Office 10' x 11'

C Pay Masters Clerks Quarters 11' x 8'

D Serjeant-Majors Quarters 10' x 12'

E Quarter Master's Stores and Office 14' x 12'

F Serjeants Mess 18' x 15'

G Serjeants Mess Kitchen 12' x 8'

H Serjeants Mess Pantry 10' x 8'

K Outside Staircase fitted with porches

5th New wooden Store (76' x 29') to be appropriated as Barracks for 180 men: hand rail and porch to be added.

6th Stone Store (64½' x 25½') to be appropriated for 120 men, partitions below to be removed and an entrance left on Ground floor on South side. Other doors to be blocked up.

7th Porches to be provided for all houses that are to be occupied by troops.

8th The old wooden house near western gate to be appropriated as Recreation Room and Issuing Store with Staff Serjeant's Quarters in Attics.

9th The main Building of Stone in centre is to be appropriated as Officers Quarters.

True Copy of original

Sd/ James Macleod

Asst. Brigade Major

North-West Service
Dominion of Canada

Estimate of the Amount required for the subsistence of the 2nd Battn Quebec Rifles for the month of October 1870.

Rank & Services	No.	Rate per day or per month per day	1870 From	To	No. of days	Total $ ¢	Remarks
Lieut Colonel	1	5.87	1st Oct.	31st Oct.	31	181.97	
Major	1	4.90	"	"	"	151.90	
Captains	7	3.58	"	"	"	776.86	
Lieutenants	7	2.30	"	"	"	499.10	
Ensigns	7	1.97	"	"	"	427.49	
Surgeon	1	4.65	"	"	"	144.15	
Paymaster	1	3.95	"	"	"	122.45	
Adjutant	1	3.34	"	"	"	103.54	
Quartermaster	1	2.70	"	"	"	83.70	
Chaplain	1	3.58	"	"	"	110.98	
		per month					
Serjeant Major	1	20	"	"	"	20	
Qr Mr Serjt.	1	20	"	"	"	20	
Pay Mr Serjt.	1	18	"	"	"	18	
Hospital "	1	18	"	"	"	18	
Armourer "	1	18	"	"	"	18	
Color Serjts.	7	18	"	"	"	126	
Serjeants	21	15	"	"	"	315	
Corporals & Buglers	35	13	"	"	"	455	
Private	286	12	"	"	"	3432	
						$7024.14	

Amounting to Seven thousand & twenty four 14/100 Dollars
Lower Fort Garry, 13th July 1870
Approved Thos. Howard Capt
A. G. Irvine Paymaster
Major
Comdr. 2nd Bn Q.R.

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